

**A learned and
excellent Treatise,
Conteining all the principal
grounds of Christian
Religion:**

*Set downe by way of conference,
in a most plaine and fa-
miliar maner.*

Written first in French, by *M. Mar. Viret*:
after, translated into Latine: and
then into English, for the
vie of our countrey-
men.

The ninth impression.

Now newly revised, and very much
amended, according to the best
and perfectest copy: with
a Table therunto
annexed.

I. TIM. 4. 15.

*These things meditate, and labour in them
that thy profiting may be manifest to all*

L O N D O N,

Printed by *Melchisedech Bradwood*, for
Edw. Bishop, and are to bee sold
in *Pauls Church yard*, at
the signe of the *Brasen
Serpent*. 1612.



T H E A R G V M E N T A N D
order of the three Bookes of
Christian Religion.

THE FIRST BOOKE

D eclareth the fundamentall points of our saluation. And it consisteth of foure Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of the knowledge of God: who, being perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull, doth not onely shew mercie, but also declare his iustice.

The second, of the knowledge of man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is guilty of eternall death before the iudgement seat of God.

The third, of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied the most perfect iustice of God for vs, openeth a way to his most perfect mercy, whereby we may obtaine forgiveness of our sins.

The fourth, of Faith: whereby we are made one with Christ; and so, partakers of all his benefits, and euen of euerlasting life.

THE SECOND BOOKE

C ontaineth the testimonies of our saluation: and it consisteth of two Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of good works: by the which, faith (lying hid in our hearts) is manifested.

The second, of prayer: which, for the testifying and confirming of our faith, hath the first & chiefe place among good works.

THE THIRD BOOKE

S etteth before vs the outward meanes, whereby God bringeth vs to saluation. And it consisteth of foure Chapters.

The first whereof intreateth of the ministration of the Word: by the which the Holy Ghost begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth it there, and increaseth it.

The second, of the Sacraments, ordeined of God to be a seals of the word; to the end we might with greater assurance embrace the promises reuealed vnto vs, in the word of Christ.

The third, of Baptisme: whereby God testifieth, that wee are receiued of him into couenant; forasmuch as hee communicateth Christ vnto vs, together with his benefits.

The fourth, of the Lords Supper: by the which God witnesseth, that his couenant is confirmed in vs, in that he maketh vs more and more partakers of Christ and his gifts.

T he summe of all, layde downe in a triple or threefold method: that wee may the better know the order and coherence of euery point of Christian Religion; as also the truth, excellency, and profit of the same.

To



TO THE CHRISTIAN
Reader, and admonition tou-
ching reading.



IT falleth out in matter of learning, as it doth in matter of meats: for, as in meats, one and the selfe same dish is diuersly set forth; according to the inuention of the dresser, and appetite of the eater; so, in learning, one and the selfe same point is diuersly handled; according to the discretion of the Writer, and capacity of the Reader. Hence it cometh, that in humane learning euery Writer (almost) hath his Grammer, his Rhetoricke; his Logicke, his Philosophy; and in diuine knowledge, his Catechisme, his Common places, his Commentaries. Many complaine of this, as a thing which distracteth the minde, confoundeth the memorie, and hindreth the iudgement. And not without cause. For, as variety of meat doe corrupt in the stomacke, and breed sicknesse, rather than preserue health; so variety of Treatises, vpon one and the selfe same thing, doth hinder the growth and profiting of diuers in soundnesse of iudgement, and godly life. But, the reformation hereof is a worke worthy of all the Churches, Princes, and States, in Christendome: for the beginning and perfecting whereof, private men can but pray and wish well; and euery man carefully looke to the warrant of his owne worke. In the meane time, let no man blame the variety and choice of Gods manifold gifts (which, both in bodily and spirituall things, set forth the riches of his wisdom and goodnesse): but let vs blame the corruption and vanitie of men; who doe either not at all vse, or else greatly abuse the gifts and blessings of God bestowed vpon them. This vanitie appeareth partly in the food of the body; but more specially in the food of the
A 2 soule.

THE PREFACE.

1 Sam. 28.
23.

Preface to M.
Coopers Ser-
mons.

Four things
to be obser-
ued in rea-
ding.

I.
Provide the
best Bookes.

Heb. 5. 13.

soule. For no man will refuse his meat, except it be in some ex-
tream passion. Besides, how carefull are the most part in making
their provision? how curious in asking what is wholesome or hurtfull
for them? how precise and constant in keeping their houres for din-
ner and supper? how willing to keepe themselves to some few kinds
of meat? though they haue often tasted and fed on them before.
But, touching the food of the soule (which consisteth chiefly in an
holy attendance on the publike worship of God, and partly in pri-
uate reading, meditation, and prayer) how many doe refuse it, as a
fruitlesse and vnsauory thing! And though the most part bee con-
sent, for some carnall respect, to shew themselves in the publike as-
semblies: yet, who shall finde a faithfull Christian, that is carefull
to redeeme the time, and to make himselfe, by private reading and
meditation, more fit to reape fruit by the publike ministry of the
Word and Sacraments? But, know thou (beloued) that as they,
who through error, preiudice, or selfe-loue, are so addicted to their
private studies, that they despise or neglect the publike Ministry,
shall (without speedy mercy of God) fall into diuers fond opinions
and dangerous errors, and pine away in their ignorance and sinnes:
so, to little purpose is our hearing of Sermons abroad, if there bee
not a settled and constant course of private prayer, reading, medi-
tation and conference, at home. But, because my purpose is now to
speake onely of reading, and that very briefly (for the argument is
infinite, and I haue somewhat touched it elsewhere) I would entreat
thee, Christian Reader, and in the Lord Iesus beseech thee (if my
request may seeme reasonable) that thou wouldst bee as wise for
thy soule as thou art for thy bodie; as mindfull of the life to come,
as thou art of this present life; and that, to this end, thou wouldst
observe these foure things, as well for the one as for the other.
First, therefore, make thy provision of good bookes; especially of the
booke of all bookes, I mean the holy Canonickall Scriptures, in that
respect called the Bible: and then of some others, such as are most
fit for thy calling and capacitie. And, because thou shalt want ey-
ther money to buy, leasure to reade, iudgement to vnderstand, or
memory to beare away the substance of all good bookes, provide the
best. Many will say, they finde by experience, that in meat and
apparell the best is best cheape: and thou shalt be sure to find, that,
among bookes: the best will yeeld most fruit to thy soule. Secondly,
because the most part are babes in iudgement and discerning of spi-
rituall things (though euery foole bee wise in his owne eyes) not
knowing

THE PREFACE.

Knowing what is fit and profitable, and what is hurtfull and inconvenient: let me intreat thee to aske counsell and aduice of the godly learned, especially of thine owne Pastor (if God haue blessed thee with an able and faithfull man) or, otherwise, of him whose publike ministerie may giue thee hope, that his senses are exercised in the discerning of good and euill. No wise man will receiue a writing for the least plot of ground, without the counsell of some learned Lawyer; nor a medicine for his body, without the aduice of some learned Physician; and wilt thou, not asking direction of some godly Diuine, aduventure vpon a booke, containing perhaps some damnable error (which may conuey from thee thy heavenly inheritance) or some deadly poison, which may kill thy soule? Doe it not. Thirdly, remember that nothing is more hard, than to bee constant in holy exercises. For herein, the subtiltie and rage of our inuisible enemy Satan doth most notably appeare. Heerein, the frailtie and corruption of flesh and blood will bewray it selfe: Heere, profit and pleasure, businesse and idlenesse, matters at home and matters abroad, company, and a thousand occasions will lie in our way, as so many lions, to let and hinder vs. Therefore herein gird vp the loines of thy minde, put vpon thee the whole armour of God, and daily renew thy couenant (of redeeming the time) made with God and thine owne conscience. Thou seest, that men who are most greedie of the world, will not misse (scarse once in a yeere) their ordinary houres of eating and drinking: Why then shouldest thou bee so fickle and vnfaithfull, in forgetting and omitting the times of reading and praying to God? Fourthly, when thou hast begunne a good booke, giue not ouer, till thou haue ended it: and when thou hast read it once ouer, let it not bee tedious vnto thee to reade it ouer againe and againe. For, thou shalt finde the second reading more fruitfull than the first, and the third more fruitfull than the second: and so the oftner the better. This is a great vanitie and euill sicknesse among men, that if they haue once seene the title of a booke, and the Authours name, and read two or three leaues thereof, it is cast at their heeles euer after, as if they had attained all that could be learned by it, when they can name the title and Authour of it. Wherefore, for this point, marke the course and manner of men, in the keeping & increasing of their bodily strength: Though they eat their fill of this kinde of meat so day, yet they come with great desire and fresh appetite to the same againe within a day or two; yea often times the same day: otherwise it argu-

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In chusing,
vse the ad-
uice of the
godly lear-
ned.

2

Be constant
in keeping
of houres.

3

Read a good
booke tho-
row, and read
it often ouer.

THE PREFACE.

eth either an extreme weakenesse, or an intolerable daintinesse of the stomacke. Heere perhaps thou wilt aske what bookes beside the holy Bible, I would commend vnto thee. Wherein though I see some difficultie, because it cannot bee done without comparisons, (which are counted odious) yet for thy good, I will not spare to shew my poore opinion; which is, That no one Authour (that I haue read) hath set downe the summe and grounds of Christian Religion more holily and happily, for the capacity and edifying of all sorts, than this present Writer. For this cause, I specially recommend him to thee; as one, by whom thou maist exceedingly profit, if thou call vpon the name of God through Iesus Christ, and binde thy selfe to diligence and constancie; remembering, that as one dish of meat, wellchewed and digested, will comfort nature more than diuers delicacies, that lie raw and vndigested in the stomacke; so one booke often and thorowly read, wil doe thy soule more good, than the superficial sight and taste of a thousand.

And so I commend thee to the Lord: who vouch-

safte to giue thee wisdom in all things,

for his mercies sake. Blacke

Friers, the 23. of

Iulie.

Thine in the Lord Iesus,

STEPH. EGERTON.



1

THE FIRST BOOK OF
Christian Religion :

Wherein the grounds of our
saluation are handled.

Speakers:

THEOPHILVS. MATTHEVV.
CHAP. I.

Of the knowledge of God, who, being perfectly iust and perfectly mercifull, doth neuer exercise his mercie, but that also hee doth exercise his iustice.

THEOPHILVS.



Most deare brother, I haue often beene desirous to heare from your mouth, the whole doctrine of Christian Religion, deliuered in a right and exact course of teaching; because once I heard you intreat, both perspicuouly and briefly, of some maine points thereof, to my great satisfaction.

Mat. If my loue and diligence, in other matters, haue neuer beene wanting, to you (most louing *Theophilus*) perswade your selfe; that (at conuenient leasure) I wil so much the more chearefully fulfill your desire, because the thing is of it selfe profitable, and such (I hope) as sha'l be to mine owne edifying. For, this is proper to Christian doctrine, that the oftner it is handled, the more largely it extendeth her force and working, in the hearts of the faithfull.

Theoph. Go to then: can you now bee at leasure to lay forth vnto me, all the chiefe points (or heads) of Christian religion, in order, as I am determined to aske you? and you shall find mee diligent to put them in writing, that so they may be imparted to my brethren.

Mat. Were it so that I wanted leasure, yet (I assure you) there is no businesse, but I would lay it aside to satisfie you in this behalfe. For, what is there, wherein time can bee better spent?

Theoph. Secing therefore our speeche shall bee of Christian

stian religion, I desire to be taught, what is meant by the name Religion.

Mat. Before I answer, I beseech God, our heavenly Father, to bee present with vs by his holy Spirit, so that wee may neither thinke nor speake any thing, which shall not tend to the honour of his owne name, and to the edification of his whole Church. The name (Religion) is deriued of a word that signifieth to bind. And it is a spiritual bond: by the which men in a holy attonement are vnited to God and held in his loue and feare; that so at length they may bee partakers of his heavenly glory, and of the blessed life. Which no religion can bring to passe, but that which is Christian: that is to say; that, whose foundation is laid in Christ.

Theo. Why so?

Mat. Because that through Christ alone, by faith (not by any merit of ours) we are brought againe into fauour with God (and euen vnited to him, with the closest bond), that so he may be glorified of vs heere, and eternally in heauen.

Theoph. From whence haue we prooffe of that?

Mat. Out of the word of God; the surest prooffe that is: vpon the truth wherof resteth all Christian doctrine.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou by the word of God?

Mat. The Canonickall books of the Bible: whereunto for this cause, is giuen the name of Holy Scripture.

Theoph. How came it to passe, that those bookes were called the Bible?

Mat. The Christians of the primitiue Church, after they had gathered the books of the Prophets and Apostles, into one volume, called it (for the excellency therof) *Βίβλια*, in Greeke (that is, *Bible* or *Bookes*) because those bookes far passe all others. For truly the word of God, in worthines and excellency, goeth beyond all the words of men.

Theo. But, how may it certainly be proued, that the doctrine, which is contained in those books, is the word of God, seeing that the prophets, & apostles, who it is certainly knowen were men, were the authors & writers of them.

Mat. First of all indeede it is necessary, that the holy Ghost, which spake by them, nay whose instruments onely they were, doe engraue that faith in our hearts. Then, that assurance

assurance may be confirmed, by observing the speciall excellencie which is easie to perceiue in those writing, as also the most holy effects which they worke in vs.

Theoph. What excellency doe you meane?

Mat. First of all, the maiesty of the spirit of God, which shineth in them most evidently: For euery where there appeare diuine & heavenly things, nothing earthly, & fading, or that agreeth with the corrupt affectiōs of the flesh.

Secondly, the consent of all the parts among themselves. For, although they were penned by diuers writers, in sundry places, and at sundry times, yet is there no lesse accord, harmony, and consent betweene them, than if they had agreed together of the matter before.

Finally, the fulfilling, of all the Prophecies, deliuered long before; yet precisely accomplished each of them in their proper time Hence it is that Dauid giueth them most excellent commendation, saying; The words of the Lord are pure words, as the siluer is tried in a furnace of earth, fined seuen fold. I say nothing of their antiquity; and that not without miracle, they were preserued among so many enemies, which would haue destroied them, and among such cruell persecutions.

Theoph. But what holy effects doe they worke in vs?

Mat. This generally we may marke, that alwaies there was (as to this day, there is) a church, which hath beene gathered together by the authority of the holy scripture: that is to say, a company of men of diuers ages, sexes, and conditions, which worshipped God according to the instructions and doctrine of that Scripture: a good part of which in all ages haue sealed the same with their blood. But the speciall or particular effects are, that they rauish the reader, and enforce him to the reuerence of God, no otherwise then as if God himselfe did speake.

Also, that, by the reading of them, our hearts are touched with an earnest feeling of our sinnes.

Last of all, that they lift vp our minds aboue all heauens; kindle within vs a desire of a better life, & cause vs that (in comparison thereof) we doe easily despise all other things.

All which are not done by any writings of men; bee they neuer so artificially handled. Therefore the Apostle

to

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2.

3.

Ier. 25. 12.

Dan. 9. 24.

Psal. 12. 6.

Heb 4.12:

to the Hebrues saith, that the word of God is lively, mightie in operation, and piercing more then any two-edged sword, and that it doth reach euen to the diuiding asunder of the soule and the spirit, of the ioynts and marrow.

Theoph. Verily, these are most strong arguments, to prooue the truth of Gods word. But, there be some which affirme, that all the authoritie and credit of it dependeth vpon the Church.

Mat. They deale herein, as if one should say, that the light of the sun hangeth vpon mans testimonie. For, as the sun shall not cease to shine, though all men were blind; so, the truth of Gods word is no whit bettered, or impaired, by the applause or disallowance of men. Moreouer, how can it be, that the authority of the word of God should depend vpon the allowance or consent of the Church? seeing that the Church it selfe borroweth all her authority of the word, as it were of her foundation. For, it is built vpon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.

Ephes. 2. 20.

Theoph. But they say, that in this place, it is not meant of the trueth of the word in it selfe; but of the meane whereby it is apprehended, and receiued of men. Which they affirme to hang vpon the testimonie and allowance of the Church. To which purpose, they alledge this saying of a certaine Father; I should not haue beleeued the Gospell, if the authoritie of the Church had not moued me.

*Any contra
apost fund.
Ad antich.*

Mat. This sentence maketh not for them. For, this was the minde of that holy man; that, being a stranger from the faith, he was moued by the authoritie of the Church to embrace the Gospell: and that, after, by the working of the holy Ghost, hee was confirmed in that faith. Which hee doth a little before declare, in these words; The Church first calleth vs to belecue that, which yet we are not able to see: that so, being made stronger in faith, we may come to vnderstand that which we belecue; God himselfe, now (not men) inwardly strengthening and enlightning our minde. Which thing I doubt not but it is true: namely, that the witnesse, which the Church giueth to the word of God, doth not a little moue vs to embrace it. But then onely this is, when our faith is beginning. For when it is come to any age, and that we our selues

selues, by reading, and hearing of the word, haue tasted of that truth: then wee beleeeue not, by the testimonie of the Church, but by that which the holy Ghost sealeth in our hearts. Insomuch, as if the Church should then teach vs a doctrine diuers from that, wee would not giue our consents vnto it. This shall be made plaine by the example of the Samaritans. These, hearing the report of the woman, with whom the Lord had spoken, (namely, that he was the Christ) beleeeued. But, after that themselues had heard him, they said vnto the woman: Now wee beleeeue not any more, for thy saying. For wee haue heard him our selues, and doe know, that this is indeede the Christ, the Sauour of the world.

Ioh. 4. 39. 42

Theoph. This example bringeth no small light to this doubt. But hitherto sufficiently of the truth and authoritie of the word of God: now let vs in a few words consider, what it doth containe.

Mat. It hath in it at large, whatsoeuer concerneth the glory of God for our good and saluation.

Theoph. By what meanes doth it teach vs to attaine saluation?

Mat. By the true knowledge of God, and of Iesus Christ; the which it teacheth.

Theoph. Let vs therefore first intreat of the knowledge of God: and after, we wil speake of Christ, in the proper place. What doe the holy Scriptures teach vs concerning God?

Mat. Three heads or principall things, whereby he is distinguished from all fained gods, besides those which wee do know by naturall instinct giuen vs of God, and by consideration of the creatures, namely, that God is a spirituall essence, eternall, of infinite wisdom, goodnes, and power.

Rom. 1. 10.

Theoph. Rehearse the first of those three.

Mat. That, in one diuine essence, there be three distinct persons, the Father, the Sonne, the holy Ghost.

Of the Trinitie,

The Father indeed is the beginning of the Godhead: but that is in respect of the order of the persons. For, in the Godhead it selfe, we may not seeke for first or last.

The Sonne is the wisdom of the Father, begotten of him before the world.

The

The holy Ghost is the infinite power proceeding from the Father and the Sonne.

Now, these three persons are distinct one from the other, not onely by those properties wherein the one of them cannot communicate or partake with the other, but also by the difference of their actions. For, the Scripture ascribeth, to the Father, the beginning of working; to the Sonne, wisdom and counsell; and to the holy Ghost, verue and power. Neuerthelesse, they bee (to all respects) equall in eternitie, dignitie and power: because there is one most vndiuided diuine essence common to them, and are therefore one God. Howbeit, so often as there is mention made of the father together with the son, or together with the holy Ghost, the name of God is then peculiarly giuen to the father (as to the first person of the Deity); and yet nothing is diminished of the Godhead of the Sonne, or of the holy Ghost: but heerein the vnitie of the essence is reteined, and respect is had to the order of the persons. Hence it is, that the Sonne is called the Sonne of God, and the spirit is called the spirit of God. But, whensoever the name of God is put indefinitely (that is, without an addition of persons) the Sonne and the spirit are no lesse noted by it, than the Father. As, when the Scripture saith; Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him onely shalt thou serue. To the King eternall, immortall, inuisible, to God onely wise, be honour and glory for euer and euer.

Theoph. Verily, this doctrine is beyond all the reach and vnderstanding of man.

Mat. It is indeed: and yet to be beleeued; as that which God in his word hath reuealed for our saluation: which cannot stand without it.

Theo. In what place of Scripture is this doctrine taught?

Mat. It may be gathered out of diuers places: but most easily it is declared by this of *John*; There be three which beare witnesse in heauen, the Father, the Word, and the holy Spirit: and these three are one. When he saith three, hee noteth the distinction of the persons: when hee saith one, he sheweth the vnitie of the essence.

Theoph. What is the reason that the Sonne of God is called Word, and the third person, Spirit?

Mat.

Ioh. 3. 16.

Gen. 1. 2.

Mat. 4. 10.

1 Tim. 1. 17

1 Ioh. 5. 7.

Mat. To the Sonne, that name is attributed, by a similitude. For, as speech is the declarer of the minde in men: so, by his Word, doth God make himselfe knowen vnto vs. Concerning the third person, that also is called the Spirit, by a similitude borrowed from men: that we may vnderstand it to be, as it were, a breath comming out of the mouth of God: not such as vanissheth, but which is his power spred ouer all things: and yet abideth alwaies in himselfe. The Prophet doth not obscurely expresse both the similitudes, in these words; By the word of the Lord were the heauens made, and by the breath of his mouth all the host of them. Wherein hee doth plainly teach; that, the Father, by his eternall wisdome, which is the Sonne, and by his infinite power, which is the holy Ghost, did make all things.

Psal. 33. 6.

Theop. Hitherto enough of the Trinity. For, the more deeply the sharpenesse of mans wit striueth to looke into it, the more it is blunted with the greatnes of that mystery. Now, therefore, declare the other head of the knowledge of God.

Mat. It teacheth, that God did not onely in six daies by his immeasurable power make all things; but also that they are still preserued and gouerned by his wisdome and prouidence, and that his hand is neuer from the worke: so that no one of all the things done in heauen or earth, commeth to passe by chance, or fortune. For the Scripture witnesseth:

Of Gods prouidence,

That the Lord sendeth thunders, winds, and tempests.

Psal. 29. 3.
Iob. 37. 5. 6.

That he thundreth with his voice, and saith to the snow, Be vpon the earth.

That he couereth the heauens with clouds, and prepareth the raine for the earth.

Psal. 147. 8.

That hee diuideth the sea, when the waues thereof doe roare.

Isa. 51. 15.

That he giueth meat vnto all flesh.

Psa. 136. 25

That he maketh peace, and createth euill.

Isa. 45. 7.
1. Sam. 2. 6.

That hee killeth and maketh aliue: that hee bringeth downe to the graue, and bringeth vp againe.

That he maketh the wound, and bindeth it vp; smiteth, and maketh whole.

Iob. 5. 18.

That

Dan. 2. 21.

That he changeth times and seasons, taketh away kings, and setteth vp kings.

Psal. 33. 16

That he ordereth warres, and appointeth the victorie.

Psal. 75. 7.

That he throweth downe, and lifteth vp.

Pro. 16. 9.

That he directeth the steps of men.

Pro. 16. 1.

That he guideth the answer of the tongue.

Pro. 21. 1.

That he turneth the hearts of men, at his pleasure.

Pro. 16. 33.

Finally, the prouidence of God leaueth no place for Fortune. For, Salomon affirmeth, that euen the whole disposition of the lot is of the Lord. It is plaine therefore, that God ordereth all things, but is not busied or turmoiled with anything.

Theoph. Now remaineth the third point of the knowledge of God.

Of Gods
iustice.

Mat. That God is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull. For, seeing he is of an infinite essence, all his proprieties and vertues be also infinite. For, they be essentiall in him: with whom (saith *Iames*) there is no change or shadow of alteration: That is to say, that, in God, there is nothing subiect to increase, change, or lessening. Whensoever therefore he doth exercise his mercie, he doth likewise exercise his iustice; punishing the guiltie and offenders, with deserued punishment. For this cause, when *Moses* had largely in these words commended the mercy of God; *The Lord God mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in goodnesse*: straightway after he addeth, *not making the wicked innocent.*

Exo. 34. 6. 7.

CHAP. II.

Of the knowledge of Man: who, being a most miserable sinner, is before God guiltie of eternall death.

THEOPHILVS.

Seeing God acquiteth not the guilty, it is so far off that by the knowledge of him, man is lifted vp into the hope of saluation, that, cleane contrariwise, he perceiueth his condemnation to be prooued and confirmed: because hee aboundeth with innumerable both infirmities and finnes, for the which he is found guilty before the most iust iudgement seat of almighty God.

Of mans free-
will.

Mat. Man is not onely, as thou sayest, defiled with many

ny vices and infirmities, but also by his' owne nature, First an enemy of God. Secondly, full of wickednesse. Thirdly, a seruant of sinne, that is to say, such a one as hath neither will nor power to doe well.

Theop. Thou doest indeed very much throw down man.

Mat. I doe not : but God himselfe, in these words ; The wickednesse of man is great in the earth, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are onely euill continually. Moreover, in the same Chapter he teacheth vs, that man is nothing else but flesh.

And Saint *Paul* plainly affirmeth, that the vnderstanding of the flesh is enmitie against God : because, saith he, it is not subiect to the Law of God : for indeed it cannot be.

The same also he affirmeth in another place, when he saith, that we are strangers from God, and enemies, our minde being set vpon euill works : as if he should say, that the enmity, hid in the heart, was betrayed by euill deeds.

In another place also the same Apostle saith, that we are carnall, solde vnder sinne : that is, that we are the bondslaves of sinne.

Yea, he proceedeth so farre as to say, that of our selues we are not sufficient to thinke, much lesse able to doe, that which is good.

Theoph. But, was this the minde of the Apostle, to shew that all generally be bondmen to sinne ?

Mat. Yea verily. For, speaking of the naturall corruption of man, out of the testimony of *Dauid*, he saith plainly ; We haue prooued before, that both Iewes and Gentiles be vnder sinne ; as it is written, There is none iust, no not one : there is not any which vnderstandeth, or which seeketh after God. They haue all gone out of the way, they haue beene made altogether vnprofitable ; There is none that doeth good, no not one.

The faithfull, indeed, be exempted out of that number : but yet, not because they are not such by nature ; but because God (such is his mercie) amendeth our wickednesse and corruption, by the benefit of regeneration, whereby he worketh in vs both the will and power to doe well ; as in the proper place, shall be more largely declared. But all the vnbelceuers, as they be vnprofitable to any good worke,

Gen. 6. 5.

Verse. 3.

Rom. 8. 7.

Col. 1. 21.

Rom. 7. 14.

2. Cor. 3. 5.

Rom. 3. 9.

Psal. 14. 3.

Eccl. 53. 28.

Phil. 2. 13.

worke, so they are carried with great violence vnto euill.

Theoph. But the thing it selfe seemeth to speake otherwise. For, there be (as there euer haue beene) some, which haue beene endued with most excellent gifts.

Matt. 7.18.

Mat. The Scripture saith, It cannot be, that an ill tree should bring forth good fruit. It may indeede sometimes bring forth such, as be goodly to see to; which notwithstanding are not good. So also may wee finde many infidels, which doe works hauing a beautifull shew, but such as cannot be good indeede: for the heart, which God specially looketh vnto, is corrupt and vncleane: for it cannot any way be made cleane, but by faith. Therefore the Apostle saith; Whatsoever is not of faith, is sinne.

Act. 15.9.

Rom. 14.23.

Theoph. Wherein standeth that vncleanness of the heart?

Mat. In that, doing these beautifull works, they be neither touched with the loue nor feare of God; and therefore doe not thinke of yeelding him obedience: neither is it maruell, seeing they know him not: Whom, notwithstanding, no man can loue or feare, before he doe know him.

Theoph. What is it then, that moueth them to doe those works which are so faire in shew?

Mat. Some, because they be not naturally giuen to the vices which they leaue.

Others, because they be restrained by a flauish feare of Gods iustice: or else for that they dreame to deserue something at the hands of God.

Others, for feare of Lawes: or lest they should doe any thing, that might hinder their prosperitie.

Or else their lusts doe stroue as the windes, so that the stronger preuaileth ouer the rest, and bridlcth them from breaking forth into action. As for example; A vaine-glorious man will make a shew to be liberall; to the end, hee may serue the turne of his ambition. On the other side, a couetous man, that he may spare charges, will set light by honor; although his minde within be set on fire with ambition. A proud man will bee bountifull, to get praise among the common people. She that feareth the reproch of the people, although her minde be defiled with vnchaste lusts, yet outwardly will be chaste. Finally, the vn-

faithfull

faithfull neuer respect the glory of God, when they thinke to doe good works. Which, neuerthelesse, is as it were the very life of good works: so as if it be wanting, they cannot be acceptable to God.

Theoph. If therefore all the goodly deeds, which the vnfaithfull doe, be of no account with God, he shall be in no better case, which carrieth himselfe modestly, and keepeth vnder the lusts of the flesh, than he which passeth away all his life dissolutely.

Mat. No verily, not so. For God rewardeth those works; yet onely in this life. And oftentimes also he giueth them such things, in respect whereof they did their good deeds: as health, quiet life, praise, good report among men, and such like. Therefore our Sauour Christ saith that the Scribes and Pharisees, in that they praied and fasted to bee

Mat. 6. 16.

praised of men, had their reward. Moreover, the state of such, as in this life haue behaued themselves modestly, shall bee easier in the day of iudgement, than of the other.

Mat. 11. 12.

Theo. How can it be, that God will reward works which he liketh not? being such, as were not done for his sake?

Mat. Thereby he declareth, how pleasing a thing true obedience is to him, seeing he rewardeth the very shadow of it. Adde this heereunto, that he hath regard vnto those works, not as they come from vncleane persons, but from himselfe.

Theoph. In what sense saiest thou that those works come from God?

Mat. I say that God, to the end that order and euen disposing of things may be kept in the world, doth bridle the wickednesse of some, and so maketh them fit to follow vertue. In which respect, we feare not (in common speech) to say, that such men are of a good nature: whereby wee meane that euen from the beginning of their life, God gaue them some speciall grace. Without which grace, there is no doubt, but that all men be such as they are liuely pictured out by the Apostle. For after he hath said, that there is not one which doth good: straight way he addeth; their throat is an open sepulcher: they haue vsed their tongues to deceit: the poison of Aspes is vnder their lips:

Rom 3. 12.
Psal. 5. 10.

B

Whose

Psal. 10. 7.

Isa. 59. 7.

Psal. 36. 2.

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitternes: Their feet are swift to shed blood. Destruction and calamity are in their waies: And the way of peace they haue not knowen: The feare of God is not before their eies. Which testimonies are gathered by him, out of sundry places of the old Testament, that he might procure himselfe the more authority and credit, touching this matter.

Theoph. But how could it be, that man the most excellent creature of all others, should be so much corrupted?

Gen. 1. 27.

Gen. 3. 6.

Mat. It was not by his first nature (for he was made after the Image of God, that is, like vnto him); but, by originall sin: wherewith *Adam*, by his disobedience in eating the forbidden fruit, infected himselfe and all mankind.

Theoph. Tell mee what that image of God is; wherein thou saiest the first man was created: as also that originall sinne, wherewith mankind was afterward tainted?

Of the Image
of God.

Mat. The image of God consisted in this, that the vnderstanding of man was enlightned with the true knowledge of God, & of the worship due vnto him; and that hee was endued with an vpright & good will, disposed to the obedience of God. Now, it is called the image of God, because in those excellent gifts, man did resemble the wisdom, goodnesse, and power of his creator. But when *Adam*, by rebellion, fell from this his estate, hee was deprived of this image, and withall did put on the image of the diuell. That is to say, he was spoiled of those notable gifts, instead whereof, came in all manner of vices. As,

- 1 The ignorance of God, and of his seruice.
- 2 Wickednes: for he hated vertue and loued sin.
- 3 Impotency, or lacke of power to all goodnes.

Of originall
sinne.

And this is that blot of originall sinne: which, beeing in vs like a fire of wickednesse and lust, doth continually breath or send forth the fruits and effects of it; to wit, vngodlinesse, and vnrighteousnesse.

Theo. But that corruption, it seemeth, should bee accounted rather a punishment of *Adams* sinne, then sin it selfe?

Rom. 5. 12.

Mat. It is doubtlesse, both a punishment of sin, and the fountaine and wellspring of all sins: Neuerthelesse, it is also sinne, and worthy of death, as *Paul* saith; as by one man sin came into the world, and death, by sin: so also death went

went ouer all men, through him, in whom we haue all sinned; that is to say, are infected with originall sinne.

Theoph. But how could *Adam* make al his posterity partakers of that infection of sinne.

Mat. By generation. For he could not beget any children, but such as were like himselfe: euen as a viper bringeth forth none but vipers.

Now it is called originall sinne, that it may appeare we are corrupted, not by any wickednes taken to vs: but that we do bring with vs an inbred corruption from our mothers wombe. Which very thing *Dauid* confesseth of himselfe: Behold I was borne in iniquity, and in sinne hath my mother conceiued me. *Psal. 51. 5.*

CHAP. III.

Of the knowledge of Christ: who, hauing satisfied for vs the perfect righteousness of God, hath opened vs a way to his infinite mercy, whereby at length we may come to eternall life.

THEOPHILVS.

L Et vs repeate the order of our former speech. Forasmuch as God in no sort can cease to be iust, nor shew any mercy, but that which may stand with his iustice; and that man is so corrupt, as hath beene prooued by thee out of the Scripture, he can looke for nothing else, but the wrath of God and eternall death?

Mat. God himselfe hath giuen the sentence. For he saith by the Prophets; Cursed be euery one, that continueth not in all things written in the booke of the law, to doe them. And againe; The soule that sinneth, that same shall die. Which things are to be vnderstood, as well of the eternall death, as of the naturall; as is declared by the Apostle *Iohn*. But in Christ, there is remedie offred vs. Therefore the knowledge of him is in the holy scriptures ioined with the knowledge, thereby to attaine eternall saluation? *Dent. 27. 26*
Ezech. 18. 4.
Rev. 21. 8.
Joh. 17. 3.

Theoph. Let vs therefore speake of the knowledge of Christ. And first of all, declare thou those things which concerne his person: and then we shall see what remedie is brought vs by him, to attaine saluation?

Mat. Concerning the person of Iesus Christ, he is the eternall Sonne of God, which tooke vpon him the nature *Of the person of Christ.*

of man, that is to say, was made man in soule and bodie, like to vs in all things, sinne onely excepted. Therefore the nature of God and man are so ioyned together in him, that they make but one person. Hee hath also but one Father, and one Mother: a Father in respect of his Godhead, and a mother in respect of his manhood, namely, the virgine *Mary*, of whose substance he was conceived by the power of the holy Ghost.

Theoph. Proue all these things briefly, out of the word of God.

Gal. 4. 4.

Rom. 9. 5.

1. Tim. 2. 5.

Act. 20. 28.

Ioh. 3. 13.

Mat. Saint Paul, speaking of Christ, saith, when the fulnesse of time was come, God sent his sonne made of a woman. When he saith, that God sent his sonne, he declareth, that Christ is the second person of the Trinity, and therefore God: which also elsewhere hee confirmeth in these words; *Who is God ouer all, Blessed for euer.* But when he addeth, *made of a woman*, he somewhat plainly notifieth him to be very man. Which also he affirmeth elsewhere in these words; There is one God, and one Mediatour of God and man, the man Christ Iesus. From the which places, we conclude, that Christ is very God and man. For although ech nature hath it owne proprietie remaining distinct to it selfe; yet to the end we may vnderstand, that in Christ they be ioined together by a most neere bond, so as they make but one person, the Scriptures oftentimes say that of the diuinitie, which agreeth to the humanitie. As when it is said, that God hath purchased his Church, with his owne blood: and contrariwise, those things are said of the humanity, which appertaine to the Diuinity: whereunto that saying of Christ is to be referred; No man ascendeth vp into heauen, but he which came downe from heauen, euen the sonne of man which is in heauen.

Theoph. Declare a little more plainly, what thou meanest by this; when thou saiedst, that each nature hath his property remayning distinct to it selfe

Mat. The diuinity was not changed into the humanity: for it remaineth eternall, infinite, and impassible. Againe, the humanity was not turned into the Godhead. For, before the death & resurrection of Christ, it was passible; such a nature as might suffer. And before, as also after death, it

was created and finite; which at one time could not be in diuers places: for this is contrary to the nature of a true bodie.

Theo. This doctrine, againe, is beyond the reach of man.

Mat. It is indeed: as also *Paul* himselfe confirmeth in these words; Without controuersie, great is the mystery of godlinesse, God manifested in the flesh.

1.Tim.3.16

Theoph. Hitherto we haue heard sufficiently of the person of Christ; now let vs speake of the remedy brought by him, to our saluation.

Mat. He hath fully satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes, and thereby redeemed vs from euerlasting death, and withall made vs capable of the heavenly life: it so be that we be partakers of his gifts.

Of the remedie brought by Christ to our saluation.

Theoph. There come three things to my minde, whereof I will aske thee.

1 How Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes.

2 How he maketh vs partakers of the heavenly life.

3 And why it is necessarie that his gifts should be made ours. Now answer to the first.

Mat. To the end this may the more easily bee vnderstood, we must remember that whereof we spake before; namely, that God hath pronounced a curse against all such as transgresse his law, & that we in two respects haue broken it: to wit, by leauing vndone the good which he requireth, & by doing the euill which he forbiddeth. Now Christ hath prouided a remedy for both: For while he was in this earth, he did fully and perfectly fulfill the Law for vs. Moreouer, he suffered the most shamefull death of the Crosse, that hee might endure the full punishment due to our sins. By which meanes, hauing abundantly satisfied the perfect iustice of God for vs, hee maketh away to his mercy, whereby we may obtaine forgiuenesse of sinnes. And in this sense it is said. That we were redeemed by the pretious bloud of Christ; that Christ vpon the tree did beare our sinnes in his body; That the blood of Christ doth cleanse vs from all sinne.

1 Pet. I. 19.

1. Pet. 2. 24.

1. Ioh. 1. 17.

Theoph. I cannot woonder enough at the exceeding great loue of God towards vs, in that he gaue his most

dearely beloved Sonne to the death, for our redemption.

Rom. 5.7.

Mat. Adde this, Which were his enemies: which also is diligently obserued by the Apostle in these words; Doubtlesse one will scarcely die for a righteous man: but for one that is profitable to him, peradventure some man will die. But God commendeth his loue towards vs, in that when we were yet sinners Christ died for vs. From whence hee draweth this most comfortable conclusion; If, when wee were enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the death of his Sonne: much more, being reconciled; shall we be saved by his life.

Rom. 5.10.

Theoph. But could the iudgement of God be no otherwise satisfied for our sinnes, except his beloved Sonne had taken vpon him our nature, therein to suffer death, the death (I say) of the crosse?

Mat. No. For man, which hath offended the infinite maiesty of God, doth deserue infinite punishment, that is to say, eternall death: which could not be suffered & overcome of any, but of the eternall and infinit Sonne of God. Moreouer, the iustice of God required this, that the same nature which had sinned, should suffer the punishment of sin. But because God could not suffer, & man could not overcome death, it was necessary that the redeemer should be very God, & very man, to do both. Wherein also it is to be marked; how neere an attonement God hath entred into with vs, by Christ; in whom the parties at variance be so inseparably ioined together. Wherby it is come to passe that God hath turned the fall of man to his great good: for, thereupon hee hath taken occasion to vnite vs more neerly with himselfe. Wherefore, where sin was increased, there grace hath abounded much more through Christ.

Rom. 5.20.

Theoph. Hitherto wee haue heard sufficiently of the first point; namely, how Christ hath satisfied the iudgement of God for our sinnes: now let vs come to the other, which is, by what right we may claime to our selues euerlasting life.

Leuit. 18.5.

Mat. By a double right, through Christ. First, because for vs he hath fulfilled the whole law: and God hath promised life to such as fulfill it. Secondly, by the right of inheritance. For, after that Christ is made ours, wee are not

only

onely made partakers of his spirituall riches (namely his perfect righteousness and obedience, whereby we are accounted iust before God) but also of his dignity, to wit, in that with him we are reputed and taken for the children of God.

Rom. 8. 17.
Colos. 1. 12.

Therefore Paul saith, If we be sonnes, we are also heires, euen heires of God, and heires together with Christ. And againe, in another place, he calleth eternall life the lot or inheritance of the Saints: and thus we see that in Christ be comprised both the rights, by which wee lay claime to eternall life for our selues.

Theoph. Therefore, in Christ alone, wee finde all things necessary to saluation?

Mat. Yea verily. For, in him there is righteousness, and the iulnesse of life: & without him, man (full of sin) findeth nothing but euerlasting malediction and curse. Therefore Peter saith, that, neither is saluation in any other; and that there is no other name vnder heauen giuen among men, whereby we may be saued. For this cause also, the name Iesus was giuen him from heauen: by the which, his office is plainly set forth: that is to say, all that which hee hath performed for our saluation, and doth still perform.

Act. 4. 14.

Theoph. Go to therefore, tell mee what the name Iesus Christ signifieth, as also of whom it was giuen him?

What the name Iesus signifieth.

Mat. 1. 21.

Mat. The name Iesus signifieth Sauiour: and an Angell gaue it to the Sonne of God: because (as hee himselfe expounded it) hee should saue his people from their sinnes. Concerning the name Christ, it is to be vnderstood, that in times past, in the old Testament, Christ was figured or shadowed in the Kings, Prophets, and Priests, who when they were consecrated, were annointed with oyle, which signified the gifts of the holy Ghost. Now the Redeemer promised, was in Hebrew, called Messias: but in Greeke it is translated by the word Christ, which in Latin signifieth Annointed. By which name, we are taught, that hee is the chiefe.

Of the name Christ.

Dan. 9. 25.

1. King,
2. Prophet,
3. Priest:

Luke. 1. 33.
Deut. 18. 18
Psal. 110. 4

Now, he was annointed not with common visible oyle, but

but with the grace of the holy Ghost, and that most fully; that from him, as from the head, it might be poured into each member, namely into all the faithfull; insomuch as they also together with him are made Kings, Prophets, and Priests. Now, the name *Christ* (being a Greeke word) hath beene retained in all tongues, because the Apostles themselves wrote in Greeke. This therefore is the cause, why the name *Christ* was giuen vnto him, as also why all the faithfull are called Christians; even because they be partakers of his anointing, and therefore of his kingdom, propheticie, and priesthood.

Rev. 1. 6.

Of the offices
of Christ.

1. Of King.

Theoph. First therefore we must see, how Christ performed the offices of King, Prophet, and Priest: and afterward how he communicateth the same with the faithfull?

2. Of Prophet

Mat. He executed the office of a King, when, by his diuine power, he deliuered vs from the Tyranny of our enemies, the diuell, sinne, and death; whom he ouercame, that he might take from them (into his owne hands) the right & interest, which they had in vs, & so subiect vs to his kingdom: which indeed hee doth continually exercise in vs, while himselfe ruleth vs by the scepter of his word, & the power of his spirit. He executed the office of a Prophet, in that he declared all the will of God, vnto vs, by his worde: he gaue vs also the holy Ghost, by whose helpe it might both be vnderstood of vs, and we yeeld our consents vnto it. This office also he exerciseth euery day, while, by the ministry of the word, and working of the spirit, he causeth vs daily to profit and go forward in that knowledge.

3. Of Priest.

Finally, he executed the office of a Priest, when vpon the crosse he offered his body & blood for vs to God the father, that he might be a satisfaction for our sins. The execution of which office hath place also at this day, in y he maketh intercession for vs. Now, this priesthood of Christ is the truth & fulfilling of all the sacrifices of the old Testament.

Theoph. Let vs now speake of our kingdom, priesthood, and prophetship.

Rev. 1. 6.

Mat. We are spiritually kings in Christ, that we may overcome the diuell and sinne.

1. Pet. 2. 9.

We are Priests; through him to offer vp an acceptable sacrifice of Praise to God.

Wee

We are Prophets; that, being taught the truth, we may teach others, and open to them the mysteries of the kingdom of Heauen. *Act. 2. 17.*

Theoph. It hath beene sufficiently declared, how Christ hath deliuered vs from condemnation, as also by what meanes hee hath made vs fit to attaine eternall life. Now the third point remaineth; namely, why it is necessary, that his gifts should be made ours.

Mat. Because, otherwise, they shall no way helpe vs to the satisfying of the perfect iustice of God: euen as other mens riches auaille nothing to deliuer vs out of debt, except they become ours.

Theoph. How therefore may his gifts become ours?

Mat. If we be made one with him. For, by the benefit of that vnion, wee are made partakers of all his spirituall graces, and riches: which are no lesse imputed vnto vs before God, than if they were ours by nature. For this cause the Apostle saith, that we are, by Christ, reconciled in that body of his flesh, through death. By which words of his, he meaneth, that the merit of Christs death pertaineth not to any, but vnto such as be grafted into his body, and are made his members. *Col. 1. 23.*

Theoph. Can no man therefore bee partaker of Christs gifts, except he be made one with him?

Mat. He cannot: Euen as a woman cannot bee partaker of the riches and honor of some great man, except shee be ioyned with him in marriage, so that they become one body and one flesh: the members also cannot draw life from the head, if they be not ioyned with it. Therefore, there is no true partaking of Christ, except there be an vnion with him. For this cause, therefore, Christ said to the Capernaits; Vnlesse ye eate the flesh of the Sonne of man and drinke his bloud, yee shall haue no life in you. In which words he plainly sheweth, that wee are not partakers of his gifts vnto saluation, except wee be as neerely coupled with his humanity, as meat and drinke are ioyned with our body; which of all others is a most neere vnion. For, meate and drinke, when they are digested in our stomacks are so turned into our substance, that they cannot be distinguished or discerned (much lesse separated) from it. *Iob. 6. 53.*

Theoph.

Ephes. 5. 32.

Theoph. This doctrine also is about the capacity of man.
Mat. It is indeed. Wherefore *Paul*, speaking of it, saith, that it is a great mystery. Now if wee can neuer so little behold the body of the sunne, but our eies will daze: how can our minds pearce to that inaccessible light of the diuine maiesty, to conceiue his heauenly mysteries; such as be the points which we haue handled,

- 1 Concerning the Trinity,
- 2 Of the vnion of the two natures in Christ,
- 3 And of coupling the faithful, with the humane nature of Christ.

It is therefore our duty, rather holily to beleue these three fundamentall points, or beginnings of Christian Religion, than curiously to examine them by the rule of our Reason.

CHAP. IIII.

Of Faith: by the which, we are made one with Christ, and so be partakers of all his gifts.

THEOPHILVS.

Hitherto I haue heard, First, that God, who is perfectly iust, doth no way absolue the guilty. Secondly, that men, which are most miserable sinners, are, before the iustice of God, guilty of eternall death. Thirdly, that Iesus Christ, by his death, hath satisfied the exact righteousness of God: the which his death is imputed to vs; that so being discharged and freed from condemnation, we may be partakers of euerlasting life: if so be that wee bee vnited with him. It remaineth therefore that I vnderstand, how we are vnited (or made one) with Christ?

Ioh. 17. 20.

Mat. By faith: as hee himselfe testifieth, in the praier which he made to God for all the faithfull, in these words; Father, I pray thee for such as shall beleue in me, that they all may be one, as thou (ô Father) art in mee, and I in thee, that they also may be one in vs.

Ephes. 3. 17.

Act 13. 39

Wherunto also that saying of *Paul* is to be referred, that Christ dwelleth in our hearts by faith. And hereupon it is, that these sentences be often repeated in the Scriptures,

- 1 That euery one which beleueth in him, is absolued and discharged.

2 Is

2 Is made the childe of God.

3 Doth not perish; but hath euerlasting life.

In which places, those things bee attributed to faith, which we receiue of Christ alone; to the end we may vnderstand, that both he and his gifts are communicated to vs by faith.

Theoph. Thou hast touched a little concerning the righteousness of faith: which I desire to haue declared by thee, somewhat more at large. For I perceiue that *Paul* oftentimes speaketh of it.

Mat. To be iustified before God, is to bee accounted iust, that is to say, without blot, and vnreproueable. Now *Paul* doth often handle this point: because it is one of the speciall grounds of our faith. For no man can please God, but he that is iustified.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because that as God is perfectly iust and holy, so he loueth holinesse and iustice: but, contrariwise, hee hateth vnrighteousnesse. And therefore wee can haue no fellowship with him, to be partakers of his heauenly glory, except we be perfectly righteous. Therefore he saith, that no vncleane thing shall enter into the holy City.

Theoph. How then are wee iustified, or made righteous before God?

Mat. In the Scriptures, there be two kinds of righteousness set forth to vs: which also do very much differ the one from the other. These are,

- 1 The righteousness of the Law, and
- 2 The righteousness of faith.

But the holy Scriptures do teach vs, that we cannot bee iustified by the former, which is of the law: to the ende we might flie to the other, which is of faith.

Theoph. Declare vnto me, wherein both these kinds of righteousness doe stand, as also what is the difference betweene them.

Mat. The righteousness of the Law, is the perfect fulfilling of the Law. For if wee did fully and perfectly fulfill whatsoeuer that commandeth, we should by our works be iust before God; neither should we neede any other righteousness. But, the Apostle in diuers places sheweth,

Iohn. 1. 12.

Iohn. 3. 16.

Of iustificati-
on.

Reu. 21. 27.

Rom. 3. 20.
Gal. 3. 11.

sheweth, that this cannot be; forasmuch as all men bee sinners, and therefore vnrighteous (which shall not be omitted by vs, when we speake of works): and therefore he concludeth that we are iustified by faith.

But the righteousness of faith is the righteousness of Iesus Christ; which, by faith is freely imputed vnto vs of God. By these things thou maist vnderstand, what the difference is betwixt the righteousness of the Law, and the righteousness of faith.

1 The Law requireth it of our selues: but faith calleth vs from our selues, to seeke for it in Christ: in whom only it is, and that indeed perfectly.

2 Againe, the Law requireth vs to obserue and doe all that it commandeth: otherwise it threatneth the curse. But faith requireth this one thing, namely that we beleeeue; and promiset all kinde of blessings to such as beleeeue.

3 Finally, the righteousness of the Law, comming from our selues, would set vp merit, and put away grace: Contrariwise, the righteousness of Faith, which is from God, taketh away merit, and setteth vp grace.

Theoph. Now I vnderstand, wherein both these righteousnesses consist, & in what things the one differeth from the other. But I thinke it may be gathered of your words, that we are not properly iustified by faith, but by the merit of Christ.

Mat. Thou gatherest rightly. For, if faith should iustifie by any inward vertue it hath, seeing that our faith is alwaies weake and imperfect, our righteousness would bee imperfect. Faith therefore is as it were an instrument wherewith we take hold vpon our perfect righteousness, which is in Christ which *Paul* plainly expresth in these words; All haue sinned, & are deprived of the glory of God: but are iustified freely, that is to say, by his grace, by the redemption made in Iesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a reconciliation, through faith in his blood.

Rom. 3. 23.
34. 25.

1 First, the Apostle witnesseth, that all men be vnrighteous; forasmuch as all men haue sinned, and therefore be deprived of the fauour of God.

2 Then he teacheth vs, that the righteousness, by the which we are iustified before God, hath the foundation in the

the onely merit of Christs death, wherewith God is pacified; so as he becometh mercifull and fauourable vnto vs.

3 To conclude, he sheweth, that, freely by faith wee are made partakers of that righteousness of Christ. How often soeuer therefore this manner of speech is vsed by the Apostle, *we are iustified by faith*, he vnderstandeth that this is done by the most perfect righteousness, obedience, and satisfaction of Iesus Christ: which gifts are then imputed to vs, when we are by faith made one with him.

Theoph. It followeth then, that all our righteousness is onely in imputation?

Mat. Yea truely. For it is necessary, to the end we may bee accounted righteous before God, that our vnrighteousnesse be not imputed vnto vs, and that Christs righteousness be imputed. Now, Christ performeth all these. The imputation of whose gifts causeth that our sinnes bee not laide to our charge, forasmuch as by the benefit of that imputation they bee couered, and remooued out of the sight of God; although he know euery one of them, so as hee can tell their very number. Concerning these things, therefore, the case standeth as it doth with the blacknes of a coale, set on fire: which blacknesse we know to be in the coale, although we see it not with our eies.

Theoph. These things call to my remembrance that excellent saying of *Dauid*, Blessed are they whose iniquities be forgiuen, and whose sinnes bee couered. Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord imputeth not sinne: but seeing our righteousness and all our saluation dependeth vpon faith, tell me what faith is.

Mat. Faith in Christ is a certaine speciall assurance, by the which we know that we are made partakers of the merit of the death and resurrection of Christ; so, as that it becometh satisfaction for vs, and forgiuenesse of all our sinnes: * which indeed is the foundation of the Christian faith. Whereupon it is, that they be indifferently vsed. For sometime the Scripture saith, that we are iustified by faith in Christ, and sometime it ascribeth it simply to faith.

Theoph. What then is faith?

Mat. The word Faith hath many significations. For sometimes it is as much, as a promise to performe some-
what

Psal. 32.1.

Gal. 2.16.

Iob 6.47.

* See pag. 24

Rom. 3.25.

26.

Eph. 2.8.

Of Faith.

what: thereupon, to keepe faith is the same with standing to a mans promise. Hercunto may bee referred the saying of *Paul*, God is faithfull; as if he had said, that God (which men doe often) neuer faileth of his promise. Sometimes also it is taken for the gift to worke myracles: as, when *Paul* saith, that if he had all faith, so as hee could remoue mountaines, yet if he had not loue, he were nothing. Besides, it signifieth the holesome doctrine of godlines. As, when *Paul* chargeth *Titus*; Rebuke them that they may bee found in the faith. In which sense, he is commonly said, to be in a wrong faith, which erreth from the purity of doctrine. But, the most proper signification of the word *faith*, is that whereof we speake in this place, and whereof there is so often mention in the Scriptures, when in many places we are said to be iustified and saued by faith; &, that without faith no man can please God. To conclude then, faith is to vs a Certificate that we are beloued of God.

* See page.
23.*

Theoph. * But why saiedst thou, at the beginning, that faith in Christ is the foundation of faith it selfe?

1 Pet. 1. 21.

Mat. Because wee cannot certainly determine, that God will be mercitull to vs, except we doe first know that Christ by his death hath made satisfaction to God for our sinnes, and reconciled him vnto vs. Therefore *Peter* saith, that through Christ we belecue in God, which raised him from the dead, and gaue him glory; that our faith and hope might be in God. From whence it is easie to gather, that Christ is the onely foundation of our faith, which the holy Ghost hath ingrauen in our hearts.

And this is, as it were, the summe of the Christian faith, which commonly is called the *Apostles Creed*, I beleue in God the Father almighty, &c.

The exposition of the Apostles Creed.

Theoph. Let vs therefore speake of this confession of the faith: which I desire thee to expound to me full and whole. But before I come to the parts of it, I will propound three things, wherein I desire to be satisfied of thee.

1. First, why it is called the *Apostles Creed*.
2. Secondly, seeing the doctrine, which is contained in it, generally belongeth to all the faithfull, why wee

we say; I beleeeue in God, not We beleeeue in God?

3. Thirdly, what properly it is to beleeeue in God?

Mat. The word (*Symbolum*) which in English sometime we translate *Creede*, in this place signifieth as it were the gathering together of many parts into one. Which tearme doth not vniuersally agree to this confession of the faith, which we see, is made of many articles.

Now, it is called the Apostles Creede, because it containeth as it were a briefe summe of all the Apostolical doctrine, written in the bookes of the old & new Testament.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other point, whereof I doubted. Why do we say rather, I beleeeue in God, then We beleeeue? seeing this doctrine is general, and all Christians are bound to beleeeue it?

Mat. That is for two causes. 1. First, because euery man can giue testimony of his owne faith: but of another mans faith he cannot.

2. Secondly, that we might vnderstand, that these articles were not written so much to teach vs, as that by them wee might be built vp to saluation. For, otherwise, they should profit vs no more, then if a sicke man saw a medicine hauing vertue to driue away a malady, the working whereof he knew: and yet did neglect to take it.

But, we professe that applying of it to our selues, when euery of vs saith, I beleeeue?

Theoph. As far as I perceiue, there is no little likenesse betwene the sicknesse of the body, and the sicknesse of the minde: and againe betwene the meanes of attaining the health of the one, and of the other.

Mat. Nay rather, there is very great likenesse: For, as in the sicknesse of the body, there be three degrees to the obtaining of health, that is to say, the

1. Knowledge of the sicknesse,
2. The knowlege of the remedy,
3. And the applying of it:

So also it fareth with our spirituall sicknesse, sinne. For whosoever hath acknowledged that sicknesse, hath attained the first degree of health. If hee know the remedy, which is Christ, he is in the second. But all this is to no purpose, except the remedy be applied by faith.

Theoph.

Theoph. Let vs therefore come to the third. What is it properly to beleue in God?

Mat. When we speake of God, we say that we beleue, three manner of waies.

To beleue
what it is.

1. First, to beleue one God.
2. Secondly, to beleue God.
3. Thirdly, to beleue in God.

Wherof the two first are the degrees, by which at length we come to the third.

To beleue one God, is as much to say, thou beleuest that there is one God.

To beleue God, is to beleue that God is true concerning his promises declared in his word.

To beleue in God, is, according to those promises, to put thy whole trust and hope in God: and this belongeth to the faithfull onely; who, by true faith, apply those promises to themselves.

Who be infidels.

Theoph. Thou dost then account them infidels, that stand still in the first or second degree?

Mat. I doe indeed. For they beleue no more then the diuels themselves doe.

Theoph. Thou hast satisfied me. Wee are therefore to come to the parts of the Creed.

Mat. They are foure.

The parts of
the Creed.

1. Of Faith in God the Father.
2. Of Faith in his sonne, Iesus Christ.
3. Of Faith in the holy Ghost.
4. Concerning the Church.

Why our
faith is refer-
red to each
person by it
selfe.

Theoph. But why is our faith distinctly referred to euery person by it selfe? seeing that it is one God, in whom we beleue?

Mat. That our faith may bee the better strengthened: which is then done, when wee consider distinctly and apart, each person according to his distinct property, hath wrought in our saluation. Notwithstanding, our faith is neuer a whit the lesse referred to one God.

Theoph. How?

Mat. For it is all one, as if a man should say I put all my hope and trust in one God, of whose loue I cannot doubt at all. For, whereas hee is distinguished into three persons, euery

every one of them confirmeth in me the assurance of that loue. For, the Father hath both created mee by his omnipotency, and doth also guide mee by his mercifull prouidence. The Son hath redeemed me by his death, reconciled me to God the Father, and euen yet maketh intercession to him for me. The holy Ghost, by his diuine power, hath sanctified mee, and ioyned mee with Christ and his Church; that with it I might bee made partaker of all his gifts, vntill he bring me euen to eternall life.

The first part of the Apostles Creed: which is of faith in God the Father.

Theoph. In this exposition of the Creed, which thou hast euen now made, there be some few things, whereof I will aske thee. I will keepe the order of the parts in propounding my questions.

I will therefore begin with God the Father: by whose gracious prouidence, thou saidst that wee are ruled. First, I demand therefore, whether the Father onely created vs?

Secondly, why thou makest heere mention of his mercifull prouidence; whereof there is no one word in the Creed. Now answer me to the first.

Mat. Those three persons (for asmuch as they haue all one essence, namely the Godhead, and therefore are one God) doe nothing a part or asunder one from the other. Therefore, both in our creation, redemption, and sanctification, euery one of the persons wrought according to their distinct property.

Theoph. In those three diuine works, shew mee this distinctly.

Mat. Concerning the creation, the Scripture doth teach vs, that the Father made all things by his word, that is to say, by his Sonne, and by his Spirit. Concerning our redemption, the Father, saith Christ, so loued the worlde, that he gaue his only begotten Sonne to the death for our redemption: which death the Son suffered by the power of the holy Ghost. The same also is to bee vnderstood of our sanctification: whereof the father is, as it were the originall fountaine. For, Christ, praying for the faithfull, saith; Father, sanctifie them. The matter of our sanctification is

Whether the father onely created vs.

1.

2.

Psal. 33. 6.

Iohn. 3. 16.

Heb. 9. 14.

Ioh. 17. 17.
19.

in the Sonne. For he addeth, I sanctifie my selfe, that they also may be sanctified. And the holy Ghost is, as it were a conduit, through the which that holinesse floweth from Christ who is the head, into vs that are his members.

Why the
Scripture as-
cribeth crea-
tion to the fa-
ther, redemp-
tion to the
Sonne sancti-
fication to the
holy Ghost.
Gen. 1.

Theo. How commeth it to passe then, that the Scripture ascribeth Creation to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the holy Ghost?

Mat. It is in respect of our rudenesse: because the worke of the father is more manifest and euident in the creation, the worke of the sonne in the redemption, and the worke of the holy Ghost in the sanctification. For, in the creation the Scripture setteth the Father before vs, as some mighty King commanding.

Phillip. 2. 7.

In the redemption, it setteth foorth the Sonne: who manifested himselfe vnto men, in the flesh; wherein he suffered death for vs.

Tit. 3. 6.

1. Cor. 6. 19.

Act. 4. 24.

Rom. 7. 25.

1. Cor. 12. 3.

In the sanctification, it setteth foorth the holy Ghost: who putteth foorth his diuine vertue and force, whereby he dwelleth in vs. Hence it is, that the Father is called *Crea- tor*; the sonne *our Lord*, that is to say, redeemer, and the Spirit *holy*; to the end we may vnderstand, that we are sanctified of it.

How Lord
signifieth re-
deemer.

Theoph. Wherefore saiest thou, that, when the sonne is called our Lord, it is all one as if a man did call him Redeemer?

Mat. Because hee hath gotten this dominion or Lordship, by his redeeming of vs. For thereby he hath deliuered vs from the tyranny of the Diuell, and subiected vs to his owne kingdome.

Theoph. I had thought, that the holy Ghost had beene therefore called holy, to note the holinesse wherewith hee is indued.

Why the ho-
ly Ghost is
called holy.

Mat. Surely, in that sense, there is no more cause to call him holy, then the Father or the Sonne; who, it is certaine, are also holy: But he is called holy, in respect of the holinesse, which he worketh in vs.

Theoph. Touching the first part, I require no more. I come therefore to the other. Wherefore makest thou mention of the gracious prouidence of God, whereof the confession of our faith maketh no mention?

Mat.

Mat. The prouidence of God is ioyned to the creation with so nere a band, that, of the one, the other doth necessarily follow. For it is altogether contrary to the nature of God, to neglect all his creatures after hee hath once made them; especially when we speake of the elect, for whose saluation he deliuered his onely begotten son to death. Albeit therefore God do guide all things by his prouidence, as hath been immediately afore declared of vs; yet, after a special maner he looketh vpon the faithfull, to be at hand for the reliefe of their wants, & to deliuer them from dangers; whom whosoever toucheth, toucheth the apple of his own eye. Now, all these things are not darkly comprehended in the article, which is concerning faith in God the father.

Of the prouidence of God toward the faithfull.

Zach. 2. 8.

Theoph. Go to therefore, go on with euery particular.

Mat. When wee call God father, it is first no doubt in respect of Christ, who is the onely begotten Sonne. Notwithstanding, from thence we gather, that he is a father to vs, whom through him, he hath adopted and taken for his children. Therefore, the name of father doth secretly containe in it, the loue of God toward vs. But he is called omnipotent, not so much that we may vnderstand hee is able to doe whatsoeuer he will; as that we may know hee not onely willeth well to vs, but can also doe what hee willeth; so as nothing at all can let him from beeing assistant to vs.

I beleene in God the Father.

Finally, he is said to be the maker of Heauen and earth; not onely to teach vs, that all things in Heauen and earth were made by him: but also to make it appeare to vs, that he hath all things in his power, that they may be aiding to vs, if need be; and that he doth so bridle the diuell, and all our enemies, that they cannot hurt vs. Therefore the faithfull doe not in vaine, put their trust in God; but with *Dauid* may say, The Lord is with me I will not feare what man can doe to me.

Maker of heauen and earth.
Act. 4. 24.

Psal. 56. 4.

Although I should walke in the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare no ill, because thou art with me.

Psal. 23. 4.

Theoph. But oftentimes it falleth out, that the faithfull are most cruelly handled by their enemies.

Mat. That neuer cometh to passe, vlesse God will it: without whom, not one haire can bee pluckt from vs.

Mat. 10. 30

Whereby it is, that he who loueth vs, (for he is our father, and is omnipotent) doth not suffer them to doe it, but for our great good.

Theoph. Were it not more fit, if wee said (according to the common receiued opinion) that this cometh to passe onely by Gods sufferance, and not by his will?

Mat. No man can separate the sufferance of God from his will but hee doth manifest iniury to God, and taketh from vs a great part of our comfort.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, thereby God should bee made idle, and all occasion of putting our trust in him should be taken away. And indeed the state of the faithfull were most miserable, if they lay open to the assaults of raging Satan, and to the bloody lust of the vngodly. But the holy Scriptures teach vs far otherwise; that the diuell could doe nothing to *Iob*, before he had obtained leaue of God: also that hee could not enter into the swine, but when Christ bad him: and that the wicked be in the hand of the Lord; that *Sennacherib*, the enemy of Gods people, was the rod of Gods wrath, and the staffe of his hand.

Theoph. But how can it be, that euill should be committed by the will and appointment of God, and yet hee allow it not? Is not this altogether vnworthy of God? Moreouer, if that were true, the wicked were not to bee blamed seeing that when they doe euill, they execute the will of God.

Mat. Although euill cannot bee committed, without the will and appointment of God: yet hee neither willeth nor alloweth it, so far forth as it is euill, but rather abhorreth it as cleane contrary to his nature: But the good which by his marvellous wisdom hee bringeth out of those euils, he both willeth and alloweth. Which may be seene in the very death of Christ: whom *Peter* affirmeth to haue beene deliuered by the determinate counsell & foreknowledge of God; (out of the which hee brought the saluation of the world) although he neither allowed the treason of *Iudas*, nor the wicked enuy of the Iewes.

From hence it is, that albeit the wicked doe the will of God, yet are they no whit the lesse guilty before him. For they haue no purpose to doe it.

Theoph.

Iob 1. 12.

Mat. 8. 31.

Psal. 17. 14.

Isay 10. 5.

Psal. 5. 5.

Act. 2. 23.

Theoph. Therefore, vnlesse I be deceiued, the wicked do not the will of God : but God doth his will by the wicked.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly. For the purpose of the wicked, in doing the will of God, is farre vnlike the purpose of God himselfe. Which *Isaiab* himselfe doth plainly note, speaking of *Sennacherib*. For, after hee had affirmed, that he was the rod of Gods wrath, & the staffe of his hand, whom he sent to a dissembling nation, whom also he would command to robbe, and take the spoile of the people whom the Lord was angry with, straight way hee addeth, But he thinketh not so, neither will his heart esteeme it so. For he imagineth to root out, and to cut off not a few nations.

Isay 10.7.

Theoph. God therefore is a maruellous workman, who can vse any instrument to the performing of his worke.

Mat. Yea indeed : hee vseth both good and euill, to his glory; but in far vnlike respects. For, he guideth the affections of the former, namely of the Angels and of the faithfull, by his holy spirit : so as the worke, which hee doth by them, is altogether good. But the other, that is to say the diuell and the wicked, are egged forward by their owne malice, and so they doe altogether varie from God ; who neuertheless, by his wonderfull wisdom, doth so gouern their actions, that in the end they fall out to his glory.

Theoph. This doctrine agreeth excellently with that which I haue heard of thee more then once, namely, that the sinnes of the wicked bee from themselues : but, while as sinning they doe this or that thing, that is of God.

Mat. Thou gatherest well. For, so doth God exercise his iudgements. For, hee punisheth sin with another sinne, and, for the most part, with a sinne of the same kinde : as murther with murther, theft with theft, according to the vnchangeable sentence pronounced by himselfe ; Whosoever sheddeth mans blood, by man shall his blood be shed. Woe to thee that spoilest : when thou hast made an end of spoiling, thou shalt be spoiled.

Gen. 9.6.

Isay 33.1.

Theoph. But, oftentimes it falleth out that the wicked prosper, so as they be free from all aduersitie, yea from deserved punishments ; and the godly euery where be pressed downe with afflictions.

Mat. God punisheth some sins in this world ; that both

his prouidence and iustice may appeare : for else he might seeme not to care what men did. And againe, hee leaueth many things vnpunished; that we may vnderstand, there is another life after this, wherein hee will most seuerely reuenge all the sinnes of men, yea, with the grieuoulnesse of their punishment equall the long patience wherewith hee endured them, and whereby through innumerable benefites he allured them to repentance.

Rom. 8. 28.

But concerning the afflictions of the godly, when God sendeth them, he hath regard both to his owne glory, and to our saluation. For according to the saying of the Apostle, All things worke together for the best, to them that loue God. I omit, that it may be there are many hypocrites among the faithfull, whose sins God doth worthily punish.

Theoph. But, what profit may the faithfull reape by their afflictions?

The profit
gotten by af-
flictions.

Mat. What profit? Not one kinde, but many : which, for the helpe of memorie, I will bring into six heads or chiefe points.

Theoph. Declare the first.

1. Humilitie,

Mat. By them, God bringeth vs to humilitie : while, by our owne experience, he prooueth, that whatsoever goodly matter we wondered at in our selues, is nothing. From hence was that speech of *Dauid* ; With rebukes thou chastisest man for iniquitie, and makest his beauty to consume as a moth : surely euery man is vanitie.

Psal. 39. 11.

Theoph. What is the cause, that God doth so humble vs?

Mat. 1. First, that all glorie and praise may bee giuen vnto him alone.

2. Secondly, that wee may put away that vaine confidence, which naturally sticketh within vs ; and so flie to him alone, and put our trust in him.

1. Pet. 5. 5.

3. Last of all, that we may be the better prepared to receiue his gifts : which he giueth not but to the humble.

Theoph. Come now to the second head.

2. Repen-
tance.

Mat. By afflictions, God calleth vs to true repentance. For when he correcteth our sins, he doth it to make vs vnderstand, how much he detesteth sin; (wherein we do not a little flatter our selues) that so also we might detest it.

And withall he tameth the rebellion of our flesh, (as hus-
bandmen

bandman are wont to tame their vnbroken or stubborne cattell, with the plough) & daily more and more teacheth vs obedience. From hence it is that *Dauid* saith; It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I may learne thy statutes.

Theoph. This bringeth that to my remembrance, which before this time I haue heard of thee; namely, that God by afflictions doth correct our vices, that hee may allure vs vnto vertue.

Mat. Thou saiest well. For euen as iron, if it be not occupied, is eaten with rust; and the earth, vnlesse it bee tilled, bringeth forth nothing but briars and brambles: So also the godly, if they be not exercised with diuers afflictions, doe as it were fall asleepe in their pleasures, and become dull and slow to Gods seruice; so as, in steed of fruits be- seeming repentance, they bring forth nothing but vanity and folly. Therefore the Apostle saith to the Hebrewes; Euery affliction for the present time seemeth not ioyous, but grievous: but, afterwards, it yeeldeth the quiet fruit of righteousnesse, to them that are thereby exercised.

Theoph. It is now time we proceed to the third head.

Mat. By afflictions God worketh this in vs that wee learne to pitty such as bee in distresse. For no man hath compassion, or suffereth with another, who himselfe hath not suffered before. By this argument, the Apostle to the Hebrewes prooueth, that Christ will haue compassion vpon our afflictions, and that he will be our aduocate with his Father. These be his words; We haue not a high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities: but such a one, as was in al things tempted in the like sort; yet without sinne.

Theoph. Go forward: declare vnto me the fourth head.

Mat. By afflictions, the Lord shaketh off our droulines, and doth stirre vs vp to earnest prayer: Insomuch as not without good cause, afflictions be called the schoole of the holy Ghost, where we are taught to pray aright. The Lord also commandeth vs to pray in the time of trouble, and promiseth that we shall be heard. Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, and I will deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me. Which all the faithfull doe often prooue true in their owne experience. For as the same Prophet saith;

Psal. 119. 71.

Heb. 12. 11.

3 Pittying of others.

Heb. 4. 15.

4 Prayer.

Psal. 50. 15.

Psal. 34. 19. The Lord is neere those that be broken in heart, and will saue the contrite in spirit.

Theoph. This is a most excellent vse of afflictions. Now declare the first.

5. Triall of
our faith.

1. *Pet.* 17.

Mat. By them the Lord maketh our faith euident, that we may be assured of it, and strengthened in it. For, *Peter* saith; that, it is tried no otherwise, then gold is tried in a fornace of fire: which is a most fit similitude. For as fire is to the baser things, which either consumeth them (as, wood and straw) or else hardneth them (as it doth clay); but pretious things, (such as be gold and siluer) it melteth and clenseth: so there be diuers effects of afflictions according to the variety of the persons to whom they bee sent. For, they doe either consume the wicked through impatience, or else they harden them through despaire.

1 On the other side, they soften the hearts of the godly, to make them call vpon God.

2 They clense their hearts: for as much as by afflictions, our concupiscence is mortified.

3 Finally, they try our faith. For, while the Lord doth temper the bitterness of them with his loue and gentlenes, hee causeth vs to take them patiently, and to fashion our selues to his most holy wil: and, by this meanes, our faith is manifested. Hee upon *Iames* calleth afflictions, by the name of temptation or triall; Blessed is the man, which endureth temptation. For when he hath beene tried, he shall receiue the crowne of life. Whereunto also that is to bee referred, which is spoken of *Paul*; that affliction bringeth forth patience, patience experience, & experience hope. For, this the Apostle meaneth; that God, by the comfort which he bringeth vs in afflictions, proueth to vs by experience the truth of his promises: where through, from thenceforth we are confirmed in the hope of eternall life.

Rom. 5. 3.

Theoph. Indeede, the former foure vses of afflictions are most excellent; and this first is nothing inferiour: hasten therefore vnto the last.

6. There-
nouncing of
the world, &
desire of eter-
all life.

Mat. By afflictions, God will call our minds away from these earthly things; that we may earnestly desire the life to come. For, the Israelites, if they had not beene ill intreated both in *Aegypt* and in the wilderness, would neuer haue

haue thoroughly thought vpon going to the land of Canaan; which was a figure of the heauenly inheritance. Therefore God doth, as a carefull nurse; who, when shee should weane the childe, laierh some bitter thing vpon the teat, to cause the child to hate and abhorre it.

Thou hast now shewed how many waies afflictions be necessary for vs. Thou seest therefore that we are not without cause warned by the Apostle, to beare them patiently, as sent from God our Father, when hee saith; My sonne, despise not the chastening of the Lord: neither faint when thou art corrected of him. For, whom the Lord loueth hee chastiseth, and scourgeth euery sonne whom hee receiueth. If yee endure chastening, God offereth himselfe to you as to sonnes. (For what sonne is there whome the Father chasteneth not?) But if yee bee without chastening, whereof they be all partakers, verily ye are bastards, and not sons. Afterward he addeth, Wee had the fathers of our bodies chastisers of vs, and we did them reuerence: should we not much more be in subiection to the father of spirits that wee may liue? For they, indeed, for a few daies chastised vs, after their owne pleasure: but he, for our profit; that wee might be partakers of his holinesse:

Heb. 12. 5. 6
7. 8.

Theo. There is no cause, then, why the faithfull should in this world looke for prosperity onely.

Mat. True: vnlesse they will deceiue themselves. For, otherwise, it were necessary, that

1. The diuell should be without enuy,
2. The world without malice,
3. And we our selues without sinne.

For the godly to be without afflictions it is impossible.

But, the diuell will alwaies burne in enuy against the faithfull; the world, with malice and madde hatred; and our sinnes will minister sufficient matter to God (who, neuerthelesse, euen therein hath care of our saluation) to giue the raines to those our enemies, to molest and trouble vs. Wherefore) according to the saying of the Apostle) let all such, as desire to liue Godly in Christ Iesus, make account that they shall suffer persecutions. Adde heereunto, that prosperity is not alwaies profitable for vs: nay, oftentimes it hurteth vs.

2. Tim. 3. 12

Theoph. Why so?

Mat.

Mist growing
of prosperity.

Pride.

Mat. Because many times it hindreth our saluation. For it bringeth forth fruits altogether contrary to those which we reckoned vp euen now.

1. For, it maketh vs proud and insolent; and keepeth vs from the knowledge of our sinnes.

2. It stirreth vs vp to serue our owne wicked lusts: and it is to them as nourishment or fuell, wherewith they are more and more set on fire.

3. It maketh vs negligent in praier; and, as it were, quencheth in vs the desire to pray.

4. It prouoketh vs to impatience, and wrath; and maketh vs void of the affection of mercy.

Act. 14. 22.

1. Cor. 10. 13

Psal. 30. 5.

5. Finally, it maketh vs drunken with the loue of our selues and of the world; and draweth vs away from meditation on the beauenly life. Therefore, not without cause, the Scripture testifieth, that through many afflictions wee must enter into the kingdome of God. And these are, in many places of the Bible, called strikings; to the ende wee might vnderstand them to be, as it were, certaine spirituall medicines, which are diuersly ministred to diuers persons, (by God himselfe, the best spirituall Physitian) according to the quality of our sicknesse, and necessitie. Notwithstanding, he dealeth alwaies, so gently with vs, that he suffereth vs not to be tempted aboue that wee are able to beare. For, while he chastiseth vs with the one hand, he lifeth vs vp with the other, and causeth the issue of the affliction to be alwaies happy: and thus he maketh prooffe to vs, of his bounty, and kindnesse in aduersitie, as well as in prosperity. For sometimes hee tempereth them both together, or else sendeth them by turnes; lest we should bee too much either puffed vp with prosperity, or throwne downe with aduersity. He creupon, the Prophet saith; Weeping may abide in the euening; but ioy commeth in the morning. Yea, rather he vseth this variety and change, that we may so much the more acknowledge what the sweetnesse of prosperitie is, and be therefore more earnestly bent to yeeld him thanks. For, as it is in the prouerbe, *Hee is unworthy of the sweet, that neuer tasted the sower.*

Theoph. Hitherto thou hast declared certaine very excellent chiefe points concerning afflictions: which if they bee

be earnestly fixed in our mindes, they will bring no small comfort, nor a little stirre vs vp to patience. Now these, vnlesse I be deceiued, are

1. First, that afflictions come not to vs, but by the will of God.

2. That they be sent to vs from God, to our good.

3. That God will assist vs to the patient bearing of them.

4. That God promisseth vs a blessed issue, yea at length a full deliuerance.

5. Finally, that, by meanes of them, prosperity is made, after a sort, more pleasant and delectable.

6 *Mat.* Thou passest ouer the chiefe point; namely, that fatherly loue of God which hee putteth in practise euen then when hee doth chasten vs. For he alwaies dealeth mercifully and graciously with vs, in the very afflictions. Which thing *David* witnesseth to these words, The Lord is mercifull and gentle, slow to wrath, and abundant in kindnesse. He is not wont to chide alwaies: neither will he keepe his wrath for euermore. He hath not dealt with vs according to our sinnes: neither hath he rewarded vs, according to our iniquities. For according to the height of the heauens aboue the earth, so exceeding is his kindnesse towards them that feare him. As farre as the East is from the West, so farre hath he remooued our sins from vs. As a father hath compassion on his children: so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him. For, he knoweth whereof we be made: he remembreth that we are but dust.

Theoph. Why callest thou this the chiefe point?

Mat. Because, vnlesse we fix our eies vpon that loue of God in our afflictions, all other comfort will be to no purpose. Contrariwise, if this go before, and they (which thou erewhile recitedst) doe follow, either I am greatly deceiued, or there is no affliction so hard which a faithful man may not be able to ouercome; especially if it be to be suffered for the testimony of the truth of the Gospell.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. There may fve causes be alleaged, beside those which thou hast heard already.

Theoph.

Six speciall
points, for
consolation
in aduersity.

Psal. 103. 2.
9. &c.

Afflictions for
righteous-
ness.

1. Pet. 3. 17.

Rom. 8. 17.

2. Tim. 2. 12.

Tertul. in
apol. aduers.
gent.

1. Pet. 4. 14.

2. Cor. 1. 5.

Mat. 5. 12.

Luk. 6. 23.

2. Cor. 4. 17.

Theoph. My heart longeth to heare them.

Mat. The first is this ; that, by afflictions for righteousnesse sake, the Lord vouchsafeth vs the honour to bee Martyrs, that is to say, witnesses of his truth. And so hee turneth the punishment ioined with shame, which wee haue deserued, into most glorious afflictions. Whereupon, *Peter* speaking of them, said ; that, it is better, if so the will of God be, that doing well wee should be punished, then doing euill.

2. The other is, that by them wee are made like, not onely to the holy Patriarkes, Prophets, Apostles, and other Martyrs, which liued before our times : but also to Christ himselfe, who hath set himselfe before vs, as a patterne of them, to be imitated ; with whom (saith the Apostle) we shall not otherwise be glorified, except wee suffer with him.

3. The third is, because the glory of God, which ought to be far dearer to vs then our owne life, is this way not a little furthered. For, it oftentimes commeth to passe, that the very enemies of the Christian truth bee called to the knowledge of Christ, and the weake confirmed in it by our constancie and open confession of Gods name. Therefore it was well said of one of the ancient Fathers, that The blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the Church.

4. The fourth is, that while wee bee made partakers of Christs sufferings, the spirit of God resteth vpon vs, where-with we are maruellously comforted. For as the sufferings of Christ abound in vs: so our comfort aboundeth, through Christ.

5. The fifth is, because our reward is great in heauen, as Christ himselfe witnesseth. Yea, rather he willeth vs to reioice, and to leape for ioy, in the midst of afflictions. *Paul* also saith the same, in these words ; The momentany lightnesse of our affliction procureth vs a farre more excellent and an eternall weight of glorie : while we looke not on things which are seen, but on things which are not seene. For, the things, which are seene, are temporall : but the things which are not seene, are eternall. Therefore we haue no occasion of heauinesse giuen vs, by suffering in this sort : nay rather we ought to take matter of exceeding comfort

comfort and ioy, as of the greatest good which is wont to be giuen of God, and as of a speciall gift which hee giueth not but to his elect and most dearely beloued children. For *Paul* teacheth, that it is giuen vs not onely to beleue in Christ, but also to suffer for him. In another place also the same Apostle saith of himselfe, God forbid that I should boast in any thing, saue in the Crosse of our Lord Iesus Christ: whereby the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.

Phil. 1. 29.

Gal. 6. 14.

The second part of the Apostles Creed: which is, of faith in Christ.

Theoph. We haue spoken largely enough of the first part of the Creed: the matter therefore requireth that we come to the second, which is concerning the Sonne, of whom thou saidst we were redeemed, and that he did continually make intercession for vs.

I doe therefore demand of thee, in which Articles that redemption and intercession is contained?

Mat. Indeed redemption hath chiefly the foundation in the article of the death and passion of Christ, which is as it were the price of our redemption. For by it, ioyning thereto the resurrection, we were deliuered from the Tyranny of the Diuell, and brought into the liberty of Gods children, which Christ himselfe witnesseth in these words, The sonne of man is come into this world to giue his life a price of redemption for many.

The foundation of our redemption.

Mat. 20. 28.

Concerning his intercession: it is ioyned by *Paul* with the article of sitting at the right hand of God, as a part thereof. These bee his words, What is hee that shall condemne? It is Christ which is dead, yea rather which is raised vp from the dead, who also is at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for vs. For because the sitting at the right hand of the Father is referred to dignity, whereunto he is aduanced with the Father, by a similitude taken from Kings, which are wont to place those at their right hand, that be most welcome and acceptable to them, and whom they desire to haue most honoured; therefore doth he ioyne his intercession with it, to the end we might know, that Christ bestoweth the great authority hee hath with

Rom. 8. 34.

with his Father in this, that by the benefit of his death, hee might become mercifull vnto vs.

Theoph. Forasmuch as in these 3. articles of the death, resurrection, and the sitting of Christ at the right hand of the Father, the chiefe points of our saluation be contained, why were the other articles put into the Creed, especially seeing it is a summe, and as it were an epitome or abridgement of the things which are to be beleued to our comfort and saluation?

Mat. It was, that our faith might be the better defended, against the temptation of the diuell and the flesh.

Theoph. I do desire to haue these things declared by thee more at large, and to bee instructed to what temptation, each article of the faith is opposed or set against, that if at any time need shall bee, I may make my vie of them.

Mat. The things which haue bene spoken by me in the former chapter, of the person and office of Christ, there is no cause in this place to repeat. This onely I will shew, that each article is placed in most exquisite order, to the ende we might acknowledge in Christ, remedies against euery kinde of spirituall sicknesses, and against all the punishments which we haue deserued. As first of all, we indeede be conceived in sinne, by meanes whereof it is that we are the children of wrath. The remedy against this euill, is that, which in the first place we beleue of Christ, namely, that he was conceived by the holy Ghost, that wee may know our conception to be sanctified in Christ, so as now euen from our first beginning, we are by him consecrated to God the Father.

Theoph. Why was it necessary, that for these things Christ should be conceived by the holy Ghost?

Mat. Because the naturall order of humane generation is defiled and corrupted; so as it was altogether necessary that the holy ghost should haue the worke in that conception, to purge and cleanse the substance of the virgin, of whom he was conceived, and that thus he might bee pure and free from the blot of originall sinne, wherewith if hee had bene defiled, he himselfe should haue needed a redeemer and mediator, so farre should he haue bene from redeeming vs, and from being able to reconcile vs to God the

Why there
bee in the
Creed more
articles of
Christ then
these three.

The vse of the
articles of the
faith against
three sundry
temptations.

Psal. 51. 7.
Ephes. 2. 3.
Conceiued
by the holy
Ghost.
Mat. 1. 20.

the Father. Adde hereunto, that there can bee no ioyning of the God-head with that that is vncleane.

Theoph. Wherefore, hauing mentioned this conception, it is by and by added, that he was borne of the virgin *Mary*?

Mat. It was to teach vs, that he did not onely take our nature: as one which was made of a woman, as *Paul* speaketh: but also that we might know him to be that very redeemer and *Messias* promised to the fathers, forasmuch as he was borne of a Virgin descending from *Adam* to *Dauid* according to the Prophecies of the Prophets, and that in the time and place by them appointed.

Theoph. Why was it necessary that his mother should be a Virgine?

Mat. That both in his conception and natiuity, the worke of God might the more plainly appeare, and that there might be nothing wherby to darken it neuer so little.

Theoph. Declare the other Articles.

Mat. Because after our conception and birth, for the innumerable sins by vs dayly committed, we had deserued to suffer euen in this life all manner of reproches and contumelies, and besides in time to come heereafter, most grievous torments both in soule and body, it is expressly mentioned, that Christ suffered all those things for vs, when it is said, he suffered vnder Pontius Pilate: for vnder him, for vs, in our stead, he was bound, railed vpon, beaten and crowned with thornes. Moreouer, wee had deserued most cruell death with reproch and shame: this also Christ suffered for vs For hee was crucified betweene two theeues, which kinde of death was accursed of God himselfe, for it was appointed for euill doers and wicked men. But by dying he ouercame death, so as death is now to vs, not deadly, but making aliue. Moreouer, the Iudge is named, vnder whom he suffered, not so much to proue the certainty of the story, as to teach vs that Christ, notwithstanding he were most iust & innocent, was for vs condemned before an earthly Iudge, as a guilty person, that by his most vniust condemnation, wee should haue full absolution and discharge before the iudgement seat of God.

Theoph. I desire to haue that more largely declared by thee, which I heard euen now of the death of Iesus Christ; namely

Borne of the
Virgin Mary.
Mat. 1. 16.
Gal. 4. 4.

Suffered vnder
Pontius
Pilate.

Crucified.
Mat. 27. 31

Dead.
Mat. 27. 50.

namely that by dying he ouercame death, so as it is not now deadly vnto vs, but making aliue.

Now Christ
brought
death to
death.

Hos. 13. 14.

Mat. That thou maist vnderstand these things rightly, it is to be knowen, that death when it would haue swallowed vp Christ, in whom is the fountaine of life, was it selfe swallowed vp of him, so as hee became deadly to death, according to the Prophecy of *Hosea*; O death I will be thy death. Seeing therefore by the death of Christ, death is swallowed vp in victory, now the faithfull are deliuered from the tyranny of it. There is no cause then why wee should feare it, nay rather let vs be bold to prouoke; and as it were to challenge death with the Apostle, crying out, O death where is thy victory?

1. Cor. 15. 54

Theoph. But it doth still dayly exercise his tyranny vpon the faithfull, for it killeth them.

Death deliue-
reth the faith-
full from in-
numerable
deaths.

Mat. Nay rather cleane contrariwise: for while it seemeth to kill them, it deliuereth them from a thousand deaths, that is to say, from the innumerable troubles of this world, to the ende they may liue most blessedly in the heauens.

Theoph. Let vs go forward to the rest.

Mat. Wee had deserued that our bodies after death, should bee thrust into the graue, which is deaths prison, and that our soules should be cast downe into hell, to bee tormented with euerlasting paines.

Christ, that he might remedy both the euils, would haue his bodie buried, that so he might pursue death it selfe being ready to die, into his owne hold, that is to say, into the graue: whose nature therefore hee changed so as it is no more to vs the goale of death, but a place appointed of God, wherein our bodies are kept against the day of the glorious resurrection.

Act. 7. 60.

1. Thes. 4. 13

For this cause the Scripture affirmeth, that the faithfull departed, are not dead but asleepe. Whereupon it came to passe, that the fathers of the primitiue Church named those places wherein the bodies of the faithfull were buried κοιμητήρια, that is to say, sleeping places.

He descended
into hell.

Moreouer, Christ would tarry in the graue some daies, that so it might certainly appeare, that he was dead indeed. But then he descended into hell for vs, when hee indured those

those most extreame torments & sorrows, euen the wrath of God, which he had deserued. Now those were the euerlasting punishments, which we should haue suffered.

Mat. 26. 38.

Vpon the feeling of these sorrowes, hee sweat bloud in the garden, and not feare of bodily death: for otherwise hee should haue bene the most fearefull of all other men.

Moreover, these sorrowes caused that in the very agony hee cried out; my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Yet not that God euer forlooke him, but because hee was in our stead, and offered himselfe to his Father as a baile for vs, it was necessary that his diuinity should be hid- den for a time, vntill the humanity had suffered all the things, which both here, and in the world to come we had deserued. Howbeit the punishment which in respect of vs was eternall and endlesse, in Christ was made temporary, and hauing end, because hee himselfe is eternall and infi- nite, and therefore he put an end to those euerlasting pu- nishments, whereunto we are accursed.

Luk. 22. 44.

Mat. 27. 46.

Theoph. But this Article of Christs descending into hell is placed in the Creede after his buriall: wherefore it seemeth, that it cannot be referred vnto those paines which he suffered before death: for the order it selfe is against it. Moreover, this selfe same thing seemeth to be contained in another article, euen in that *hee suffered vnder Pontius Pi- late*: in which words, not those paines onely are to bee vn- derstood, which hee suffered in his body, but those also which he suffered in his soule.

Mat. This article of Christs descending into Hell, can- not otherwise be expounded, but as it hath bene expoun- ded of me. For if it be referred to his buriall, as some would haue it, bringing for the confirmation of their opinion those places of Scripture, wherein the graue it selfe is called by the name of Hell; it shall be nothing else, but a repeti- tion of that which is far more plainly set out in the for- mer article: which indeed doth not agree to so short a summary as the Creed is. Much lesse is this article to bee vnderstood of Christs soule going downe into the place of the damned. For Christ said to the theefe, This day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Moreover, there was no such thing further required, for as much as all things were

Luk. 23. 43.

Ioh; 19. 39.

The order of
the articles
which respect
Christ.

finished vpon the Crosse : for hee saide a little before his death, It is finished. Concerning the order or methood, it hath beene before declared by vs, that they which wrote this Creed looked vnto this, that in each article they might set before vs, the seuerall remedies, which bee ministred vnto vs by Christ, against all kinds of temptations and spirituall diseases. Therefore they would not onely expresse the paines which he suffered in his body, but also the fearefull torments which hee suffered in his soule, and which vnto vs are most terrible, for these we haue deserued to endure for euer in Hell it selfe : the temptations whereof farre exceed that which ariseth of the afflictions of this life, yea and bodily death. Wherefore hauing comprehended all these paines generally in this article, He suffered vnder Pontius Pilate; afterward they would handle them particularly. And first of all, those which he suffered in body, in these words ; Hee was crucified, dead, and buried : for they purposely ioyned his buriall, that as it were in one row, they might comprehend al things, which appertaine to the abasing of his body. Which beeing declared, they added those horrible torments, which hee suffered in his soule, in these words; He descended into Hell. Which they did, to the end wee may vnderstand, that Christ when hee had suffered all the things, which wee should haue suffered in Hell, did as much, as if by a locall descending, hee had descended into Hell it selfe; and that therefore we are free from it.

Theoph. Now do I very well allow the exposition of this article which you haue deliuered, as that which bringeth vs no small comfort. Yea I doe very well like the order of it selfe. For it is easier to apply the sufferings of Christ to our selues, when they are reckoned vp in that order wherein we should haue suffered them, than in any other.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly : for the temptation of the second death, that is to say, of the punishments which abide for vs in hel, is wont to come into our minds after the temptation of the first death.

The third day
he rose again.

Theoph. Declare vnto me the other articles.

Mat. The resurrection followeth, by the which Christ ouercame death, hell, sinne, yea the diuell himselfe, and triumphing

triumphing ouer them, and leading them captiues, he ascended into heauen, whether he is gone vp with the greatest glory, not so much for himselfe, as thereby to open a way for vs, and to take possession of it in our name, vntill our soules come to possesse it after death, and body and soule together after the resurrection. But because so long as we heere liue, euen after we are by faith made partakers of Christs gifts, we fall into many sinnes, which are wont to trouble our consciences, and to weaken our faith, it is by and by added, that hee sitteth at the right hand of the Father, to the end we might know, and bee assured of that intercession which hath before bene mentioned. And so we might vnderstand, that after hee had once suffered death vpon the Crosse for our sinnes, he doth continually offer the merit heereof vnto his father for vs, and therefore causeth the father himselfe to be fauourable vnto vs. Which thing *Paul* sheweth in these words, Christ is at the right hand of the Father, and maketh request for vs.

More, he vseth that great authority whereunto he is aduanced, to the gouernment and help of his church against all the hurts that might come vpon it, and to the accomplishment of our saluation. Finally, because (such is the weakenesse of our faith) some feare of condemnation in that last day may assaile our minds, wherein the Lord will render to euery one according to his works: therefore that this temptation may bee met with, it is saide further, that Christ which is our intercessor, shal also be our Iudge. And this is the meaning of that article, wherein we beleue that he shall come to Iudge quick and dead, euen that wee might be without all feare of condemnation; and contrariwise, certainly know, that by the sentence of the Iudge himselfe, we shall obtaine saluation.

Theoph. Who are those quicke and dead, who thou saiest shall be iudged of Christ?

Mat. The quicke are they which at that day shall be aliue, who also as *Paul* saith, shal be changed in the twinkling of an eye: and the dead are they, whom death before shall haue taken out of the company of the liuing.

Theoph. But is it necessary; that the dead should rise againe in that day, of whom iudgement was giuen before,

Luk. 24. 17.
Ephes. 4. 8.
He ascended
into heauen.
Act. 1. 9.

And sitteth at
the right hand
of God the
Father Al-
mighty.
Col. 3. 1.

Rem. 8. 34.

Mat. 16. 27

From thence
he shall come
to iudge
quicke and
dead.

1. Cor. 15. 52

whether they be good or euill?

Mat. These things shall not let their appearing at that day; and that for two causes:

1. The first, because that first iudgement pertaineth onely to the soule: but the latter to the whole man.

2. The other is, that that particular iudgement may bee proclaimed before all men, and so there may bee a more manifest declaration of God his righteousness. Therefore the Scripture affirmeth, that in that day both good and bad shall be iudged by Christ according to their works. which without doubt shall be brought to light, as it were manifest testimonies, either of the faith, or the vnbeleefe, lying hid in the heart, although faith it selfe, or vnbeleefe in those that come to yeeres, bee speciall causes either of the saluation or damnation of men, as it is declared by the Iudge him selfe; He that beleeueth in me, is not condemned: but hee which beleueneth not, is condemned already, because hee hath not beleued in the name of the onely begotten Sonne of God.

Ioh. 3. 18.
5. 24.

Why Christs death is mentioned ofner in the Scriptures then the other things hee did for vs

Rom. 5. 10.

Rom. 4. 25.

1. Cor. 15. 14

Theoph. I do now at length acknowledge all the articles which appertaine to the faith of Christ, to be indeed profitable, yea necessary to the establishment of our faith. I would notwithstanding know, why in the Scriptures his death onely is for the most part spoken of, as in that place of *Paul*: We are reconciled by the death of his Sonne.

Mat. By such kind of speeches, the scriptures, desirous of breuity & shortnes, for the chiefe part nameth the whole. Neuerthelesse, sometimes his resurrection also is ioyned; because in it Christ ouercame death: whereupon it is, that the force of Christs death hangeth vppon his resurrection. For if Christ be not raised vp (saith *Paul*) our faith is vaine. This also is to be noted by the way, that the death of Christ is not seldome vnderstood by his bloud, because that powring out of his bloud, amongst other things which he suffered for vs, is very excellent and notable.

Theoph. Bring forth some testimonies for it.

Col. 1. 20.

Mat. They are to bee found euery where in the holy writings. Peace beeing made by the bloud of Christ, by him hee hath reconciled all things to himselfe: as well those that be in earth as those that be in heauen, that is to say;

say, both those that be in the Church already receiued into heauen, as those that be yet in the militant Church below.

We were redeemed not with corruptible things, as siluer or gold: but with the pretious blood, as of a Lambe without spot, and vndefiled, euen of Christ. We are iustified by the blood of Christ.

1. Pet. I. 19.

Rom. 5. 9.

*The third part of the Apostles Creed: which is,
of faith in the holy Ghost.*

Theoph. Wee haue proceeded farre enough concerning faith in Christ. Now therefore we must come to the third part of the Creed, which is of the holy Ghost, whereunto thou diddest attribute, that it doth sanctifie vs, and ioine vs with Christ. But there be two things, which I will propound vnto thee to be declared.

1 First, wherein that sanctification standeth.

2 Secondly, in what sense thou saiest, that we are by the holy Ghost ioined with Christ, forasmuch as euen now thou ascribedst that vnto faith.

Mat. The sanctification which the holy Ghost worketh in vs, standeth heerein, that it amendeth the corruption planted in our minds, and repaireth the decay of our soules, otherwise cast away and vndone by originall sinne.

Theoph. Declare to me the effects of that repairing.

Mat. First of all, it lightneth our mindes, so as wee doe acknowledge the true God in Christ, and yeeld him the worship due to his maiestie.

Secondly, it reformeth our harts, working faith in them, which pietie or godlinesse followeth, that is to say, the loue and feare of God, from whence also springeth repentance it selfe. For this faith which lieth hid in the heart, sheweth it selfe, as it were visible to the eies. But the sanctification, whereof wee speake, is not seldome called by the name of regeneration.

Theoph. Why is it called also by this name?

Mat. Because, when the holy Ghost by his grace & vertue worketh in vs, stedfastly to belecue the things which in former times we condemned, and that truly repenting wee doe the things which be directly contrary to our former actions: wee doe in very deepe seeme to bee borne

Ephe. 4. 24.
2. Cor. 5. 17.

What our re-
generation or
sanctification
is.

Col. 3. 10.

again, and to be made new men, as *Paul* speaketh : And verily all the parts and qualities of our soule are so reformed, as they may seeme to be altogether changed.

Theoph. Therefore this sanctification or regeneration, is nothing else, but the repairing of the image of God, which we lost in *Adam*.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly : and *Paul* himselfe testifieth this, when hee saith, that wee haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge, agreeable to the image or likenesse of him that created him. But Christ is hee, by whome that likenesse of God is brought from heauen vnto vs, and communicated by spirituall regeneration, euen as *Adam* by carnall generation had made vs partakers of sinne with him.

Theoph. Thou speakest of two generations, very much differing the one from the other, I meane the first which we haue from *Adam*, from that which Christ worketh in vs by his spirit.

1. *Mat.* Verily, by that first generation we are borne vnto sinne; but by this latter we are borne vnto righteousness.

2. By the first we are borne children of wrath; by the latter, children of God.

3. By the first we are borne vnto death; by the latter vnto everlasting life. And for this cause Christ said to *Nicodemus*, Except a man be borne againe, he cannot see the kingdome of God.

Theoph. Hitherto I haue heard what sanctification or regeneration is, namely that it consisteth in the vnderstanding of heavenly things concerning our saluation; and in the reformation of our heart and will, which causeth vs to beleue in God through Christ, and to obey him. But how is it that the Apostle whom thou citedst speaking of this repairing, maketh mention onely of the vnderstanding, and not of the will? For he saith, that wee haue put on the new man, which is renewed into knowledge agreeable to the image of him that created him.

Mat. In that place indeede there is onely mention of knowledge, but vnder the name of knowledge are vnderstood both holinesse of life and reformation. Which also, in another place, are by name spoken by the same Apostle,

Aposle, when he saith, that that new man is put on which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. Thou seest that in those places, one part is taken for both, because they are at once or together reformed by the holy Ghost, although in diuers maner. For to some he giueth more knowledge than reformation. And contrariwise to some others, more zeale and reformation, than knowledge.

Eph. 4. 24.

Theoph. But how is it, that there be many also found, vnto whom there is giuen more then common knowledge of God, and of his truth, whose life notwithstanding is most wicked?

Mat. Indeed I grant this, that God sometimes giueth euen to the vnfaithfull some knowledge of his truth, which also for the most part is coloured with great words, & externall shew. But it is not the right knowledge of the true God, which is alwaies ioyned with his obedience. Neither indeed can any man know him, but he is straightwaies beloued of him: but that loue cannot stand except we do obey his commandements. Therefore *Iohn* saith, By this we know that we know him, if we keepe his commandements. He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandements, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1. Iohn. 2. 3.

Theoph. But whether of those two is the better, either the knowledge of God, or the obedience of his commandements?

Mat. Indeed knowledge is better than obedience in this, that it begetteth in vs both the loue and obedience of God, but especially for that by it we are transformed as the Apostle speaketh, from glory vnto glory, that is to say, as it were by certaine degrees, as that knowledge getteth increase in vs. Neuerthelesse, that image or likeness of God, doth not so expressely shine in vs in knowledge, which for the most part lieth hid in the mind, as it doth in obedience, namely while we liue temperately, iustly, and godly: for those excellent vertues declare vs not to be bastards, but the true children of God.

2. Cor. 3. 18.

Ti. 2. 12.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because as we are thought their children according to the flesh, whose likeness we haue concerning the bo-

die : so are we accounted his spirituall children, whose spirituall likenesse we shew in our workes.

*Joh. 8 39.
44.*

Theoph. Thou callest the words of Christ to my remembrance, wherewith he reproveth the Scribes and Pharisees, boasting themselves to be the children of *Abraham*. If you were *Abrahams* children, you would doe the workes of *Abraham*. You are of your father the diuell, and the lusts of your father will you fulfill.

Mat. 5 45.

Mat. Very truly. Heereunto also may be referred that saying of Christ, which he addeth after that hee had exhorted vs to holinesse of life ; *That you may bee the children of that your Father which is in heauen.* But this holinesse and reformation of life are effects and fruits of repentance, wherof mention was made before by vs, when we spake of sanctification.

Of repentance.

Theoph. Let vs therefore now speake somewhat of repentance : and first what is repentance ?

*Ier 31. 33.
Eze. 36. 26.*

*Psal. 119.
14. 17. 47.*

Mat. It is the hatred of sinne, and an earnest loue of righteousness, by the which we are continually stirred vp to abhorre our vices, and are moued to doe good workes, not for feare of punishment, or hope of reward, but for that loue wee beare towards God, which worketh in vs, that with a ioyfull heart wee are moued to his obedience, and with griefe go astray from his commandements. And therein is the promise fulfilled made vnto vs of God by his Prophets, namely that he will take from vs the stony heart, in stead whereof hee will giue vs an heart of flesh, wherein he will engraue his Law, that wee may walke in his commandements. Hence it commeth, that the Law of God, which in former times was grievous and hated of vs, is now not onely not grievous, but most acceptable and delightfull, euen as it is written by the Prophets.

Theoph. How many parts of repentance be there ?

Mat. Two. Namely, 1. The mortification or killing of the old man, that is to say, of the corruption which by reason of sinne sticketh within vs. 2. And the resurrection of the new man.

The same also be the parts of regeneration : for it is necessarie that the holy Ghost doe first kill all euils, and euen corruption it selfe, before it plant good things in our hearts.

hearts. But that mortification hath it force from the death of Christ, of whom when we are made partakers by faith, he doth not onely blot all our finnes, but also causeth that we acknowledge them, and being acknowledged, do hate them. Which thing *Paul* teacheth vs in these words: This wee know, that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sinne might be weakned, that heereafter wee should not serue sinne. Rom 66.

Moreover, the rising againe of the new man, which borrowing his force and efficacie from the resurrection of Christ, worketh strength in vs, by means whereof from the heart we apply our selues to the obedience of God, which also the same Apostle plainly teacheth, where he saith: We are buried together with Christ by baptism into his death, that as Christ is raised vp from the dead, into the glorie of the Father, euen so should we walke in newnesse of life. Rom. 6 4.

Theoph. Are then these two parts ioined together by so strict a band, that the former can neuer be seuered from the latter?

Mat. They are indeede: for it is impossible that any man should be partaker of Christs death, but the same also is partaker of the fruit of his resurrection. The Apostle expressly affirmeth it; If wee be grafted with Christ to the similitude of his death, euen so shall we be to the similitude of his resurrection. For this cause so often as the Scripture speaketh of repentance, it doth not onely simply vnderstand some griefe conceiued for our finnes, but reformation of life, and returning to a better course, which be witnesses of that sorrow lying hid in the heart. Therefore such as brag of repentance, and yet doe not returne, nor giue themselves to amendment of life, are liers, and doe mocke God himselfe. Rom 6 5.

Theoph. Thou saiest truely: for in our common life, he should be thought to mocke vs, that said he was sorrie hee had done vs wrong, and yet indeed continued in the thing it selfe. I doe rest satisfied in this doctrine of regeneration. But by it, that is not a little confirmed which was before prooued by thee in the Chapter of *Man*, namely, that man by his owne nature is the seruant of sinne, which neither vnderstandeth heauenly things that appertaine to his saluation,

uation, neither hath any freedome or power to doe that which is good. For seeing those faculties and powers are giuen vnto vs by the spirit of regeneration, it is without doubt that we lack them, and therefore that we are altogether vnable of our selues to belecue, or to doe well.

Of mans free
will

Mat. Thou gatherest well. But because this doctrine, concerning mans free-will, before this time, being as it is at this day in controuersie, is notwithstanding of great force to the establishment of the glory of God, and of our owne saluation, although it hath before beene declared by vs, yet I will not thinke much to speake of it againe, and to confirme it by testimonies of the Scripture. And first of all, concerning the true knowledge of God and of Iesus Christ, which is the foundation of our saluation: Christ himselfe saith; No man knoweth the Son, but the Father, neither doth any man know the Father but the Son, & he to whom the Son will reueale him. No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him. But concerning the will, and that power whereby we doe obey God, *Paul* saith. It is God which worketh in vs to will, and to performe it. Which also is confirmed of Christ himselfe by a most fit similitude, in these words; As the branch can beare no fruit of it selfe, except it abide in the vine, euen so neither can you, except you abide in me. He that abideth in me, and in whom I abide, the same bringeth much good fruit; for without me you can do nothing. Which things being so, what can man of himselfe belecue in the matter of religion, but error & lies? what is he able to do when the question is of worshipping God, but all maner vice & wickednes? I will adde a place out of *Paul* wherein all this doctrine in one word is plainly set downe. You were dead in sins and trespasses. He saith not, that you were sicke, so as some little life was left in you, but you were altogether dead. The selfe same thing also hee confirmeth afterward, when he saith; that, in being regenerated by God, we were raised vp from the dead. If therefore the vnregenerate man be spiritually dead in sinnes, it followeth that he hath no more vnderstanding in things pertaining to eternall saluation, than hath a dead man in the things of this life.

Moreouer, if a man vnregenerate be spiritually dead in sinnes,

Mat. 11. 17.

Ioh 6. 44.

Phil. 2. 13.

Ioh. 15. 4.

Ephes. 2. 1.

Ephes. 2. 5. 6.

sinnes, he hath no more power to doe a good deed, then a dead man hath to doe the actions of the body. Therefore euen as our soule giueth life to the body, so also the spirit of God is the life of our soule, being otherwise dead, and vnable to beleue or doe any thing that is good.

Th. Although I do wholly giue consent to this doctrine, which I see hath expresse grounds in the holy Scriptures, yet I will propound vnto thee a certaine obiection, sometimes put fourth to my selfe; about the answering wherof I found no small difficulty: namely, that God seemeth to mocke vs, who so often by the Prophets exhorteth vs to turne vnto him, and to keepe his commandements, if it were not in our power, at least in some part, to do this. Furthermore, that exhortations be made in vain, the vse of admonitions is but needlesse, and that reproofes are but ridiculous, if it were not in the power of the sinner not to sin.

Mat. They that measure the strength of man by Gods commandements, be altogether deceiued. For Christ commandeth vs: Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy mind. And againe, Be you perfect, as your father which is in heauen is perfect. But what is hee which confesseth not, that hee can neuer come to that diuine perfection, nor loue him with that loue that is due.

Mat. 23. 37.

Therefore as it is notably written by *Austin*, God commandeth the things which we cannot doe, that we might know what we ought to aske of him. Which indeed may appear euen by this, that euery where by the Prophets, the Lord commandeth vs to turne vnto him, and to repent vs of our sinnes. But *Jeremy* answereth, Couuert me Lord, & I shall be conuerted: when thou didst correct me, I did repent. For this cause the same *Austen*: which handled this doctrine of free-will most excellently, writeth in another place, O Lord giue me that which thou commandest, and command what thou wilt.

*In Enchirid.
ad Lauren.
de gratia &
lib. arbit. 16.
Ier. 31. 18.
Eze. 18. 30.
Ioel. 2. 2.
Confes. l. 10.*

Theoph. Indeed this is a solution, or answer to that obiection, not to be despised.

Mat. I doe adde, that it may bee gathered out of *Paul*, that exhortations to holinesse of life, haue not their foundation vppn our naturall powers, but vpon the promise of God,

God, wherein he promiseth to be with vs, not to helpe our Freewill in part, but wholly and altogether himselfe alone to make it good in vs.

Theoph. Bring some places out of *Paul*, for the confirmation of this doctrine

1. *Thes.* 5.
23. 24.

Mat. Writing to the Thessalonians, when he hath admonished them to liue blamelesly, iustly, and soberly, in loue and in patience, hee praieth to sanctifie them, to the end they might be able to performe those things: and at length saith; Faithfull is hee that hath called you, which will also doe it. In another place also, after he had exhorted the Philippians, to worke out their owne saluation with feare and trembling, presently hee addeth: For it is God which worketh in you both the will and the deede, euen of his good pleasure.

Phil. 2. 12.
13.

Theoph. What vse is there of exhortations, admonitions, and reprehensions to the vnbeleeuers.

Mat. They shall be a witnesse against them, when they come to the iudgement seat of God: For they shall the more be conuicted of rebellion against God, and of the hardening of their owne hearts.

Theoph. I am now well furnished against those, that shal heereafter set vpon me with that obiection.

Ioh. 7. 18.

To conclude, it seemeth to mee, that this doctrine may fitly be referred to that, which sometimes I haue heard of thee; namely, that all the sinnes of men be of themselves, and not of God; but that their good workes, if they doe any, be not of themselves, but of God.

Mat. True. Neither is there any cause, why we should feare to receiue this for true doctrine, forasmuch as it tendeth both to the glorie of God, and the throwing downe of our selues, which is a most certaine marke, whereby we may discerne or know true doctrine from false, according to the rule of Christ.

In what sense
the holy
Ghost is said
to be authour
of our vnion
with Christ.

Theoph. Now wee are to goe forward to the rest. Wee haue at large handled the first effect of the holy Ghost, let vs therefore come to the other. How makest thou the holy Ghost the author of our vnion, or being made one with Christ, which in the beginning of this Chapter, thou diddest attribute vnto faith?

Mat.

Mat. When I did attribute or giue it to faith, I did it according to the vse of the scripture: but this I meant, that faith is the instrument, and as it were a spirituall hand, by the which we doe receiue Christ with all his gifts. In the meane time, this is to be vnderstood, that the holy Ghost is author of them all. For the vniting of vs to Christ, which is in heauen, is not done but by his owne diuine power: Adde heereunto, that the holy Ghost begetteth faith in vs, and therby sanctifieth vs, that so we may be made fit to receiue Christ, and apply him with al his gifts vnto our selues.

The fourth part of the Apostles Creed, which is concerning the Church.

Theoph. We haue expounded three parts of the Creed: it remaineth that wee come to the fourth, which concerneth the Church. Now there come two things into my minde, whereunto I would haue thee to answer. First,

1. What the Church is; and
2. Why thou saiedst, that by the working of the holy Ghost, we are ioined with it.

Mat. The worde Church, signifieth a company: in this place it is taken for the company of the faithfull chosen of God.

But although the Church bee onely one, which is the spouse and the mysticall body of Christ, yet it is wont to be considered in two respects:

1. As it is inuisible. And
2. As it is visible.

Theoph. What doest thou vnderstand by the name of the inuisible Church?

Mat. Al the elect, which may be diuided into three sorts

1. The first, of them which already be receiued into heauen, who are therfore called the Triumphant Church, because, hauing ouercome all temptations and troubles, they enioy the heauenly glory.

2. The second is, of them which do yet liue in the earth

3. The third of them that are yet vnborne. Now these three parts in that last day, shall bee gathered together into one body, and they shall bee a Church altogether triumphant and glorious.

Theoph.

What the Church is.

Of the inuisible Church.

Of the visible
Church,

Theoph. Which is the visible Church?

Mat. The company of the faithfull, gathered together in the name of Christ, to be instructed and confirmed in his faith, by the sincere preaching of the word, as also by the right and lawfull vse of the sacraments, which are two most certaine marks, wherewith God would marke her out, and as it were set her forth to be seene, that shee might be knowen of all her children, and they might bee gathered vnto her.

Now this is that which is called the militant Church, because continually it warreth with the diuel, the flesh, and the world.

Theoph. Why will God haue all his children ioyn themselves to the visible Church?

Mat. That he may be worshipped of vs, which is, when we doe agree together in calling vpon him, and that he, as a good housholder, may feed vs with his word the spirituall foode, wherewith we may be daily strengthened, vntill he bring vs to the celestiall inheritance.

Theoph. What is the vse of this article?

Mat. You shall most easily perceiue it, if you doe but marke the testimonies of praise & commendation, wherewith *Paul* decketh the Church, which indeed are answerable to diuers places of the Prophets. Now they bee three, and that most excellent: For he termeth her,

1. *Tim.* 3. 15
Gal. 4. 26.

1. The house of God.
2. The pillar of truth.
3. The mother of all the faithfull.

Theoph. Wee are to examine the reason of these titles giuen vnto her. And first of all, why doest thou call it the house of God?

Mat. 18. 19

Mat. That we may vnderstand, that God dwelleth in his Church, doth defend it & guide it by his holy spirit. Euen as Christ himselfe saith: Where two or three bee met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

Theoph. Why is it called the pillar of truth?

Mat. Because by the ministry thereof, God preserveth his truth in the world.

Theoph. What is that truth?

Mat. Christ himselfe, when as hee is acknowledged to be

be not only very God & very man in one person, but also a Sauour and Redeemer, which is the most certaine truth, and most profitable to the beleeuers: for by it they attaine eternall life. Which Christ himselfe affirmeth in these words: I am the way, the Truth, and the Life.

Ioh. 14. 6.

Theo. Therefore it followeth, that this Church which we belecue, forasmuch as it is the pillar of truth, cannot erre:

Mat. Indeepe in those points which appertaine to the person and office of Christ, it cannot erre: but in some other parts of doctrine it may erre, which falleth out not seldome.

Theoph. Why may it not erre in the things which concerne Christ, as well as in others?

Mat. Because by the testimony of *Paul*, Christ is the onely foundation of the Church, which being taken away, it can no more stand, than an house without a foundation,

1. Cor. 3. 11.

Theoph. What if the church erred in those things?

Mat. It should then not bee a Church but rather the Synagogue of Satan: seeing it had ouerthrowen or pulled downe Christ the true foundation of it.

Theoph. But Christ seemeth to haue ordained another foundation of the Church beside himselfe, namely *Peter* the Apostle, to whom he said, Thou art *Peter*, and vppon this rocke will I build my Church.

Of the foundation of the Church.

Mat. The name of rocke no way can or ought to be referred vnto *Peter* himselfe, although the words may seeme to beare it. For *Paul* affirmeth, that no other foundation can be laid by any, besides that that is laid, which is Iesus Christ. Moreouer, how absurd a thing should it bee that the Church which is inuisible, should haue her foundation in mortall man, and that which more is, one very weak, so as not long after he denied Christ? Verily it hath neede of a stronger foundation, that it may be able to stand against so many assaults, wherewith it hath beene and still is set vppon, by the Diuell and the world: euen from the beginning.

1. Cor. 3. 11.

Theo. Deliuer therefore the true sense of these words of Christ to *Peter*.

Mat. Because *Peter* had confessed Christ to bee the sonne of the liuing God, Christ answereth; But I say that thou

Mat 4.18.
& 10.2.

Vpon Iohn.
tract. 124.

1. Pet. 2. 5.

Why the
Church is
called holy.

thou art *Peter*. Now hee is called by that name which Christ had beforegiuen vnto *Simon*, because he was a lining stone in the building of the Church, who acknowledged Christ to be the sonne of God, and therefore the chiefe stone in the Church. When therefore he addeth; Vpon this rocke I will build my Church, that is referred to that rock, which *Peter* himselfe had confessed. *Austin* agreeth with this interpretation: for he saith; The Church is built vpon the rocke, whereof euen *Peter* had his name: therefore truly the Lord saith; Vpon that rocke, will I build my Church, because *Peter* had said; Thou art Christ the sonne of the liuing God. Vpon this rocke therefore, saith he, which thou hast confessed, I will build my Church. For the rocke was Christ, vpon the which foundation, *Peter* himselfe was builded: For no other foundation can any man lay, but that which is already laid, which is Christ Iesus. These bee the words of that Father: wherewith also agreeth that which *Peter* saith, when he exhorteth the faithfull, that as liuing stones, they would be built vpon Christ that chiefe stone. But he proueth this out of the testimony of *Esay*: Behold I put in Sion a chiefe corner stone, elect and precious, in whom whosoever belecueth shall not bee ashamed. Hee addeth also out of the Psalme: The stone which the builders refused, is made the head of the corner, that is to say, vpholdeth all the building.

Theoph. Hitherto wee haue heard sufficiently of the second thing testified in the praise of the Church: wee must come to the third. Why is it called the mother of vs all?

Mat. First, because God therein hath begotten vs with the incorruptible seed of his word. And then, because hee hath put vs ouer vnto it, as to a speciall good mother, to be gouerned and brought vp, that wee may daily encrease and grow in faith, vntill we attaine to the inheritance of our heauenly Father. Wherefore, whosoever refuse the gouernement of his mother, can neither haue God for their Father, nor claime to themselves any right in his inheritance.

Theoph. Let vs consider the very words of the Creede, and first of al; Why is the Church called holy?

Mat. For two causes: the first and chiest whereof is this,

this, because as *Paul* speaketh, It is sanctified after that hee hath cleansed it, by the washing of water, through the word. As if he should say, that it was made cleane from all sinne, by the pretious blood of Christ, which is daily presented vnto vs, both in the word and in the Sacraments.

Eph. 5. 26.

The other cause is, for that the members of it, which indeed are regenerated and sanctified by the holy Ghost, do apply themselues diligently to holinesse of life: wherein by the benefit of the ministry of the church, they goe forward euery day somewhat. Notwithstanding, in them selues it is certaine, they bee defiled with many filthinesses and sinnes, which indeed are not imputed vnto them: for they are partakers of Christs merits, by whose helpe they obtaine forgiuenesse of sinnes.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other title of the church: why is it called Catholike or Vniuersall?

Mat. That we may vnderstand, it is not now tied to any certaine place or people, as we read, it was vnder the law, before the comming of Christ: but that it is dispersed and scattered thorowout the whole world, and distinguished into many members, which are particular Churches, gathered together in sundry places, which notwithstanding make one body of the Church, for they bee endued with the same faith, and hope in Christ.

Why the church is called Catholike.

Theoph. It may seeme then, that the Church which was before the comming of Christ, was diuers from ours.

Of the church before Christ.

Mat. Thou gatherest ill: for although in some circumstances it differed from ours, yet it was one Church in substance, forasmuch as both of them acknowledge

1. One and the selfe same Father, God.
2. One Iesus Christ, redeemer and mediator.
3. Because also that old church had the same hope with vs, namely to obtaine saluation by faith in him; by the which faith the beleeuers euen then communicated with his body, and therefore were partakers of all his gifts.
4. Because they had the same ministry of the word and Sacraments with vs, as concerning the substance.

Theoph. But how could this be, that the faithfull should be partakers of the true body of Christ, which was not yet borne?

Apoc. 13. 8.

Mat. It was then indeed spiritually received by faith, as it is this day of vs: this onely is the difference, that our faith looketh to Christ now long agoe manifested; but the faith of those ancients looked to Christ, which was not then come. Neither were they therefore excluded from the true partaking of him. For all things are present with God. Hence is that of *John*; The Lambe (meaning Christ) slaine euen from the foundation of the world.

Iob. 8. 56.

Christ also affirmeth the selfe same thing; when he saith, *Abraham* reioiced to see this my day, and hee saw it, and was glad.

Theoph. But be there any places of Scripture, whereby this may be determined, that the faithfull, which were vnder the Law, were truly and indeede partakers of Christs body?

1. Cor. 10. 3.

Mat. There be. For *Paul* saith, That all the fathers did eat the same spirituall foode with vs, and that they all dranke the same spirituall drinke: for they dranke of the spirituall rocke that followed them, and that rocke was Christ. By which words hee meaneth, that the fathers by their Sacraments did no lesse communicate with the body of Christ and his gifts, than we doe at this day by ours.

Theoph. What then is the difference betweene their and our Church?

Mat. There be reckoned not one, but foure.

Col. 2. 17.

1. First, because the olde Church did set forth Christ his death and resurrection darkely, by certaine outward ceremonies, as sacrifices, lights, washings, and such other, which of the same Apostle are called shadowes of things to come, but the body is Christ.

Wherefore, seeing that by his comming hee hath put an end to those ceremonies, he hath now discovered and manifested himselfe far more openly to vs. For hee commeth forth, as it were in the mid-day, abounding with his gifts, that euery one may see and know them. For this cause the Apostle compareth the fathers which liued vnder the law, vnto children, which did learne as it were their letters and first grounds; to giue vs to vnderstand, that we may be called learned and skilfull, if wee be compared with them, This therefore is the difference.

Theoph.

Theoph. Declare the second.

Mat. This consisteth in amendment of life: for as the knowledge of Christ is greater, so also the efficacy and working of the holy Ghost is far greater, which mortifieth our flesh; so as we do more earnestly obey his commandments, according to the promises declared by the Prophets; This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel: After those daies (saith the Lord) I will put my Law in their inward parts, and will write it in their hearts: I will put my spirit within you, and will cause you to walke in my statutes, and to keepe my iudgements, that you may doe them. Yet, not that the godlie before the comming of Christ, were without the spirit of regeneration, but that we might be taught how the Lord in the very comming of Christ, by whose blood he renewed the covenant with vs, did more abundantly bestow his gifts vpon his people. For this cause the Lord did suffer not a few blemishes of the Israelites, which among vs were not to be borne: no otherwise then as a most wise Father will beare with many childish faults of his sonnes, as long as they be children, but when they be come to yeares, he will in no case beare them.

Jer. 31. 33.
Eze. 36. 27.

Theoph. I would haue thee shew me some example.

Mat. I will alledge one; The bill of diuorcement, which was nothing else but a liberty to put away the wife, euen for the smallest cause. But the Lord affirmeth that it was permitted to the Israelites, for the hardnesse of their harts, that is to say, as well for their rudenesse, as for their infirmity. Notwithstanding hee sheweth, That for the time to come it was not lawfull, but for fornication.

Mat. 19. 8.

Theoph. But it may be objected, that we are so farre off, from excelling the fathers of the Israelitish church, in holinesse and sanctimony of life, that contrariwise, there bee not a few of them found, which did a great deale goe beyond vs, such as were *Moses, Elias, Daniel, &c.*

Mat. When we speake of the difference betweene the Church of the Israelites and ours, wee must not alledge some speciall gifts granted to some speciall men, but it must bee considered, what was the whole body of that Church, for therein standeth the difference,

Theoph. Declare the third difference.

Mat. It is herein, that euerlasting life was obscurely and darkely offered to the Israelites, wrapped or folded vp in earthly promises. For they were children, as *Paul* speaketh, whose age farre more esteemeth some small things, than those that be of the best value. But now after we be come to age, and are taught the Gospell, by meanes whereof the benefit of eternall life is much more plainly made known vnto vs, we are in the very right way, led to the hope and meditation of it, neither doe wee stay in these earthly and fraile things And this was the cause why the Fathers vnder the Law esteemed this life more than wee ought to esteeme it.

Theoph. Now remaineth the last difference.

Mat. It is that, whereof by the way we made mention: namely, that the Church vnder the Law, was as it were bounded with the borders of Iudea, or shut vp within that countrey. But now it is scattered throughout the whole world, neither is it tied to any place.

Mat. 10. 5.

Mar. 16. 16.

For this cause, Christ when he sent forth his Disciples to preach the Gospel before his death, in plaine words forbade them to go to the Gentiles, but to the lost sheepe of the house of Israell. But after his resurrection, when he had put an end to the ceremonies of the Law, hee biddeth his Apostles, going into all the world, to preach the Gospell to euery creature.

Beholde what the differences be betwene the olde and our Church. Now these haue beene the causes, that the books of the Bible, which respect the state of the Church before Christ was borne, had the name of the old Testament; and those which were written after his resurrection, are called the new Testament, or the new Couenants, yet not that there be two couenants, or two Testaments betwixt God and his Church: for there is onely one which is diuersly considered.

Theoph. Let vs go forward to the rest. What is the reason why wee say; I belecue the Church, and not, I see the Church?

Mat. Although particular Churches be seene of vs, yet because heere is intreated of the vniuersall Church, which

we

we cannot behold with the eies of the body, therefore we doe not say, I see, but I belecue the Church. I adde moreover, that the Church properly is no other but that company of the elect. For the hypocrites and reprobates which are mingled with the particular Church, are not members of the vniuersall Church. I doe adde furthermore, for a larger declaration hereof, these two arguments: First,

I That it falleth out not seldome, that by the persecutions of the enemies, the Church is so scattered, that it seemeth almost to bee cleane put out. Howbeit it is not so, but onely for a time it is remooued from our sight, euen as the wheat lieth hidden vnder the chaffe. Which indeed came to passe in the daies of *Elias*: for the Prophet complained that he alone was left. For hee thought that all the people were fallen away from true Religion. Notwithstanding the Lord answered: There bee remaining vnto me seuen thousand, which haue not bowed their knee before *Baal*. Therefore when the Church is hidden either in the whole or in the parts, yet ought wee not thereupon to cease to belecue that it is. For the Lord said by the Prophet, that Israels seed should not faile, as long as Sunne and Moone should bee in the heauens. The same thing doth Christ confirme, when he saith, that it shall neuer be, that the gates of hell shall ouercome the Church, that is to say, that neither the Diuell nor his Angels shall euer bee able to bring to passe the finall or vtter destruction of the Church, howsoever God sometimes so giue them the bridle, that is to say, such libertie, that they bring vpon it great calamitie. The Church therefore may most fitly bee compared to that bush, which *Moses* heretofore saw in the wilderness, which burnt in the fire, & was not consumed.

Theoph. How doth the speech of the gates of hell, whereof Christ maketh mention, agree with the practises, deceits, and counsels of the Diuell?

Mat. It is a similitude or likenesse taken from commonwealths, in the which in former times iudgement was vsed at the gates of their cities, where also the store of Armour and munition for wars was kept. Heereupon it grew, that commonly in ancient times the gates were taken for strength and counsell.

1. King. 19.
12.

Ier. 31. 36.

Mat. 16. 18

Exod. 3. 2.

Gen. 24. 40.

Judg. 5. 8.

Theoph. Bring forth the other argument, by the which thou maist prooue, that the Catholike Church is to be beleued.

Mat. It is drawen from this : that although in it there haue alwaies beene many elect (seeing the word of God is neuer preached in vaine) yet neuerthelesse all they that ioine themselues to particular Churches, doe not straightway belong to the vniuersall Church : that is to say, are not by and by of the number of the faithfull and chosen. For as (saith *Austin*) there bee many sheepe without the sheepfold of Christ, which God in his time will call ; so there be many wolues in the very Church, whose hypocrisie the Lord in their time will discover. Therefore (to vse the words of the Apostle) God only knoweth who be his. And this is the cause, why making mention of the inuisible Church, I comprehend vnder it the elect of God still liuing in the earth.

Rom. 4. 5. vpon
Iohn.

1. Tim. 2.

Theoph. But are the elect themselues, being called of God, and ioined to the particular Churches, vncertaine of their saluation ?

Mat. No not so. For each of them may know their own faith, by a discerning thereof put into them by the Holy Ghost ; but anothers faith they cannot. The word of beleeuing containeth all these things. For it is as if thou saiedst, I beleue that there is a certaine company of the faithfull and elect in the Church, which God defendeth in this world, of whose number I certainly know that I am. In the mean time Christian charity requireth this, that wee iudge well of all those that haue ioined themselues to particular Churches, so long as they shew themselues tractable, and doe obey admonitions.

Theoph. It commeth to my remembrance, that the article of the Church is set after the article of the holy Ghost, because the holy Ghost beareth witnesse within vs, that we be members of it.

Mat. Not onely for this cause, but especially because it is gathered together by the diuine working of it, by the which indeed wee are knit together into one bodie with Christ, and are partakers of all his gifts : that is to say, the merit of his death is communicated vnto vs, by the which

we obtaine forgiuenesse of sinnes; the force also of his resurrection is imparted to vs, whereby wee shall rise againe glorified in that last day, and shall liue eternally with him. All which things are in the Creed in exact order set downe presently after the article of the Church.

Theoph. Hitherto we haue spoken sufficiently of the true Church: and so wee haue dispatched the first point that I propounded. Let vs therefore come to the other. What is the reason that thou saiedst, wee were no lesse ioyned by the holy Ghost with the Church, than with Christ?

Of the communion of Saints.

Mat. Because it cannot ioyne the faithfull with Christ, but it doth also ioyne them together among themselves, euen as the members cannot be ioyned with the head, but they be also vnited together into the body. Now this is a most fit similitude, and best agreeth to the vnion which we haue with Christ. For as the head, if it bee ioyned with the members, guideth them, nourisheth them, and giueth them life and motion; euen so Christ performeth all these things to his Church, with the which hee is made one by the working of the holy Ghost. For this cause is this sentence so often repeated of the Apostle; Christ is the head of the body of the Church. The faithfull are the body of Christ, and members for their part. Therefore Christ himselfe giueth his owne name to the Church, as when he reprooued *Paul*; *Saul, Saul*, why persecutest thou mee? and this he doth because the head and members be one.

Col. 1. 18.

1. Cor. 12. 27

Act. 9. 4.

A short exposition of the Apostles Creed,

Theoph. Thou hast made mee to vnderstand all the articles of the Apostles Creed: Neuerthelesse, to the end the things which thou hast saide may sticke the faster in my minde, I desire that the summe of the same articles may be againe laid foorth in some short Paraphrase, or exposition, as also to be taught how the faithfull may apply them to themselves.

Mat. Thou desirest a thing (except I bee deceiued) not vnprofitable. Therefore euery one may comprehend the sum of the Creed, and apply it to himselfe, in these words; I put my whole trust in God the Father, as in him which will blesse mee. For I doubt not, seeing he is the father of

I beleene in God the father.

Iesus Christ, but he is also my Father, and therefore loueth me perfectly and infinitely, euen as hee himselſe is perfect and infinite.

Almighty
maker of
heauen and
earth.

Now, that will of his cannot bee hindred by impotency or weaknesſe, as that of our earthly parents is wont to be. For he is omnipotent, and hath all creatures, as well thoſe that be in heauen, as thoſe that be in earth, in his hand to do me good, to keepe me ſafe from all finnes, and to helpe me in all my neceſſities, ſo farre forth as hee himſelſe ſhall know to be expedient for me: who alſo doth ſo keepe in, bridle, and hold backe the diuel, and all mine enemies, that they cannot by any meanes hurt me.

And in Ieſus
Chriſt his on-
ly ſonne our
Lord.

I doe alſo put my whole truſt in Chriſt Ieſus our Lord, the onely ſonne of God, of the ſame eſſence with the Father and the holy Ghoſt, who came downe into the earth that he might liſt mee vp into heauen, which was made man, to the end he might haue the ſame God with me, and I might haue the ſame father with him. For theſe bee his words, I aſcend or go vp to my father and your father, and my God and your God.

John. 20. 17.

Which was
conceiued by
the holy
Ghoſt, borne
of the Virgin
Mary, ſuffered
vnder Ponti-
us Pilate.

Who alſo, that hee might reconcile me to God the Father, was conceiued by the holy Ghoſt, and borne of the Virgine Mary: Moreouer, vnder *Pontius Pilate* hee ſuffered all the reproches which I had deſerued. For he was bound as a guilty perſon, that I might be looſed out of the chaine of the Diuell and ſinne. He was condemned of an earthly Iudge, notwithstanding he were moſt iuſt and innocent, that I which am guilty of innumerable tranſgreſſions, might be diſcharged before the tribunall ſeat of the heauenly Iudge.

Crucified
dead and
buried.

Who in ſcorne was cloathed in purple, and crowned with a crowne of thornes, that he might make mee partaker of his glorious crowne, and kingly dignity.

Who was nailed to the croſſe, dead and buried, that he might deliuer me from the curſe of death, and ſlaue-rie of ſinne, and the tyranny of the diuell.

He deſcended
into Hell.

Who for me deſcended into hell, while as he in the very time of that paſſion, ſuffered both in ſoule and body, the fearefull torments of the wrath of God, which I had deſerued, and wherewith I ſhould for euer haue been over-whelmed

whelmed in hell: who also the third day rose againe from the dead, that for my sake death being fully overcome, hee might giue me life.

Who finally ascended into heauen, from whence I was banished for my sins, that he might set open a passage for me into it, and might in my name take possession of the heauenly kingdome.

But now he sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, and there continually maketh intercession for me with his Father, and offereth for mee the merit of his death, that so he may become mercifull vnto me.

I belecue also that at the last day hee shall come visibly downe from the heauens to iudge both quicke and dead. Neither is there any cause why I should feare or be afraide of condemnation, seeing I shall stand at the iudgement seat of that Iudge, which is also my patron and aduocate. I do therefore assuredly know, that hee will giue sentence on my side and absolue me, that I may be partaker of his glory.

I doe also put my whole trust in the holy Ghost, which is God of the same essence with the Father and the Sonne, who also hath ioyned me with Christ, and sanctified mee in him.

Which beareth witnesse with my spirit that I am the child of God.

Which maketh request for mee with sighes that cannot be expressed.

Which comforteth me in aduersitie.

Which kindleth a desire in vs to lead our liues in the obedience of God, strengtheneth vs, & finally giueth vs the gift of perseuerance to the end. Confirmeth and strengtheneth me against all temptations. If at any time I fall, it raiseth me vp by true repentance, and assureth me of assistance with his power, euen vnto death.

I belecue the Catholike Church, gathered together by the power of the holy Ghost, that is to say, the company of the faithfull chosen of God, which are scattered thorowout the whole world, of whose number I doe certainly know my selfe to be one.

I belecue that all wee which are faithfull, are so vnited and

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into Heauen.

Sitteth at the right hand of God the Father almighty

From thence shall he come to iudge the quicke and dead.

I beleue in the holy Ghost.

The holy Catholike Church.

The communion of saints.

and ioyned with Christ our head, that we are made partakers of his gifts, that is, of the merit of his death and the power of his resurrection.

The remission
of sinnes.
Resurrection
of the body.
The life euer-
lasting.

Whereupon I am assured of the full forgiveness of my sinnes, and of my glorious resurrection in the last day, (which the partaking of eternall life shall follow) together with all the faithfull and elect, with whom hee shall for euer be praised of me in the heauens.

Theoph. I haue verily heard of thee an excellent Paraphrase or short exposition of the Apostles creed, and such a one as doth not a little serue for edification. But that thou maiest prouide for, and helpe the memory of the vnlearned, draw all this into a short summe as thou canst.

The summe of
the Creed.

Mat. It cannot be made shorter, than if thou say: I put the whole hope of my saluation in one Iesus Christ crucified, who being giuen vnto me by the mercy of the father, communicateth himselfe vnto me by the power of the holy Ghost, to make me partaker of the merit of his death, and also of eternall life. Now this agreeth with that which the Apostle saith: I esteemed not to know any thing among you, but Iesus Christ, and him crucified.

1. Cor. 2. 2.

Theoph. I am fully satisfied with this exposition of the Apostles Creed, and it containeth many things, which bring no small comfort to the hearers. And I beseech our good and heauenly Father, to engraue them in our hearts by the working of the holy Ghost, & that so wee may earnestly acknowledge & stedfastly beleue that immeasurable loue wherewith he loueth vs in Christ Iesus, by whom he hath redeemed vs from euerlasting death, and hath taken vs for his children, that at length we may be heires of his kingdome.

Mat. But now night draweth on, wherefore I would aduise, that we deferre the rest, till to morrow: Farewell
Theophilus.

Theo. Fare you well also *Mathew*

The end of the first Booke.

THE SECOND BOOKE OF *Christian Religion:*

Wherein the testimonies of our
saluation are declared.

CHAP. I.

*Of good workes, by the which the faith that is hidden in our hearts
is manifested, that it may be seene and known.*

THEOPHILVS.

God saue thee most dearely beloued *Matthew*.
Mat. God saue thee also most louing *Theophilus*:
Hast thou thought vpon the things, which we han-
dled yesterday?

Theoph. Yea indeede most diligently, insomuch as they
occupied my minde in my sleepe: wherof to make prooffe,
if it be not troublesom to thee, I will comprehend them in
a short sum, which shall be as an entrance for vs to the rest.

Mat. Thou shalt doe me a very great pleasure.

Theoph. The summe of our speech yesterday may be re-
ferred to foure heads:

1. The first whereof, is of God, distinct in three per-
sons. Who also by his prouidence gouerneth all things, is
most perfectly iust, and most perfectly mercifull.

2. The second is of man, who being by his owne na-
ture a most wretched sinner, is guilty of eternall death be-
fore the iudgement seat of God.

3. The third is of Christ Iesus, whose death is a most
present remedy for vs against death.

4. The fourth is of faith, whereby that remedie is ap-
plied to vs for our saluation.

Now vnlesse I bee deceiued, order requireth, that wee
speake of good workes, which doe necessarily cleaue vnto
faith, and be effects of it. Moreouer, seeing in the first two
chapters of the former Booke, it hath beene declared what
manner one God is, and in the third and fourth Chapters
what a one he sheweth himselfe toward vs; this one thing
seemeth now to remaine, that wee vnderstand, how wee
should

should carrie our selues towards him, that is to say, what workes are to be done of vs, that we may obey him, and be acceptable to his Maiestie.

Mat. Thou hast very well deliuered the summe of our yesterdaies talke : I doe also allow the order propounded by thee concerning good workes.

This one thing remaineth, that you mooue your questions of them in some easie method, to the end that this place which of it selfe is somewhat intricate and doubtfull, may be plainly and cleerely handled of vs.

Theoph. I haue no easier method, than that which sometimes I learned of thee, namely, that all this discourse bee brought vnto three heads ;

1. First, what bee the good workes, to be done of vs, that we may please God.
2. How we may performe those workes.
3. And thirdly, to what end wee must doe them, and what is the vse of them.

But in the former Booke, when wee spake of regeneration, wee did sufficiently discusse this second point. For we taught that man of himselfe could doe no good thing, and that God by his spirit, wrought in vs both to will and to be able to doe. Wee are therefore to examine the other two points which are behinde, which will cause vs to diuide this chapter into two parts, if it so seeme good vnto you.

The first part of this Chapter, sheweth what good works we ought to doe.

Theoph. Let vs therefore come to the first part : namely, what good works are to be done that we may obey God.

Mat. Before wee goe any further, wee are to call vpon God, without whose guidance we cannot thinke of, much lesse performe, any good thing. I doe therefore beseech our good God and heauenly father, to giue vs the spirit of wisdom and vnderstanding, that the things which wee shall speake of good works, may agree with the truth, so as they may tend to his glory, and the building of his Church. Now *Theophilus*, doe I answer vnto thy question ; That we must doe those good workes to obey God, which himselfe hath commanded in his owne Law.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. For he hath plainly forbidden to adde any thing to it, or to take ought from it, and hath commaunded that no man should turne aside from it, either to the right hand or to the left.

Theoph. What if men be so rash that they dare doe it?

Mat. The Lord will not accept their foolish deuices for good works, but will demand of them, that which in former times hee demanded of the Israelites: Who required these things at your hands?

Theoph. I confesse it to be a most iust and righteous thing that the worship of God should bee according to his owne prescript, and not after the inuention of men: forasmuch as we also which are created of him, do require this of our seruants, that they serue vs according to our direction.

Mat. Right: for otherwise wee might thinke our selues not the masters, but the seruants of our seruants. Should it therefore be righteous and iust, that God which is our Creator and Lord, should allow that in vs, which wee our selues condemne in our seruants as a thing vnrighteous and vniust.

Theo. Seeing they only be good works which God hath commanded in his law; let vs see what the law of God is.

Mat. It is that which himselfe deliuered to his people by the hand of *Moses*, which also with his owne finger he wrot in two Tables of stone, forty daies after the deliuerance of the people out of their bondage in *Ægypt*, which is also commonly called the morall law; beginning thus, Heare Israel, I am the Lord thy God.

Theoph. Why is it called Morall?

Mat. Because it intreateth of manners, as it appeareth by the etymology or true interpretation of the word. For it sheweth vs the vertues to be followed, to obey God, as also the vices to be auoided, lest wee incur his displeasure. But it is also called Morall, to put a difference betweene the Ceremoniall, which comprehendeth the ceremonies prescribed of God in the old Church, as also between the Iudiciall or Politicall law, which containe iudgements, and the penalties to be inflicted vpon such as breake this Morall Law.

Deut. 4. 3.

Deut. 5. 32.

Esa. 1. 12.

The Morall Law.

Exod. 20. 2.

Deut. 5. 6.

The Morall Law distinct from Ceremoniall and Iudiciall.

Theoph.

The Morall
law grauen in
the minds of
men as it
were renewd
by Moses, and
expounded in
many places
of Scripture.

Theoph. Is not this morall law, the same doctrine wherof the Philosophers wrote so many books, and which they called Morall Philosophy?

Mat. Yes verily. For it is nothing else, but the Law of nature, which God hath ingrauen in the hearts of men; which also, because by litle and little it wore out (for it was greatly darkened by sinne) hee did as it were renew by the proclaiming and writing of it. Therefore concerning the Philosophers, they onely attained vnto, and taught the shadow of that, the body wherof, & the very truth it selfe, is most briefly purtraied or painted in this law; and is after beautifully set out in the proper colours in the writings of the Prophets and Apostles. For the Prophets and Apostles, so often as they intreat of vertues and vices, bee the true interpreters of the Law.

Theoph. Wherefore saiest thou that the Prophets and Apostles, when they speake of vertues and vices, bee the true interpreters of this Law?

Mat. Forasmuch as the Lord forbade to adde any thing to the Law, or take ought from it, it followeth necessarily, that it is most perfect, and that therefore whatsoever the Scripture in any place doth command or forbid vs, ought of necessity to be referred vnto the law, and be accounted an exposition of it. And indeed by this meanes he would take away all excuse from the transgressors of the Law.

Theoph. How?

The morall
law compris-
ed in very
few words.

Mat. First, that no man should pretend the largenesse of it as an excuse, why he had not learned it by heart; the Lord would haue it brought into so many precepts, as we haue fingers vpon our hands. Whereupon, more than once it is called of *Moses*: Ten words.

More largely
declared.

Afterward, least any by the shortnesse should seek to excuse himselfe, that hee could not come to the vnderstanding of it, the Lord would expound and declare his owne mind more at large by his Prophets and Apostles.

The exposition of the Morall Law.

Theoph. We are therefore to examine this morall Law. How many parts be there of it?

Mat. The Lord himselfe is the diuider of it, and hath divided

diuided it into two Tables. In the former whereof, being perfected in foure commandements, hee would establisth true religion: for, it teacheth all the worship which hee requireth of vs. But in the latter, in six commandements hee hath taught, that loue, friendship, and fellowship, ought to be kept among men: for in it hee hath commaunded all those things which serue to maintaine peace and agreement amongst vs. Briefly, the first Table commaundeth all those duties which man oweth to God: and the latter, all that man oweth to man, according to the will of God. For the commandements of the latter Table are to bee referred to the former, that is to say, they ought to be kept, not indeed for our neighbours sake, but for Gods sake, who hath commanded them.

Two Tables

The summe
of the Morall
Law.

The first Table of the Law.

Theo. Now we must come to the exposition of the foure Commandements of the first Table. I doe therefore demand of thee, what order thou thinkest meet to bee kept, that the whole matter may be made the plainer?

Mat. 1. My aduice is, that in the first place we expound the Preface set before the law.

The order of
the first table.

2. Secondly, I will deliuer some generall rules of speciall good vse, to giue light to euery commandement.

3. Which things being set downe, these foure commandements of the first Table shall generally bee expounded, and withall we will obserue, how well they agree one with the other. And at length we will come to the exposition of each commandement by it selfe.

The Preface of the Law.

Heare O Israel, I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.

Theoph. I will follow the order which thou aduiseft, and will beginne at the Preface of the Law. What then is the meaning of it?

Mat. First, the Lord would haue vs attend to the hearing of the Law, when he saith: Heare Israel.

2. He doth also challenge to himselfe power, and the right of authority in these words; I am the Lord: wherein

he

he sheweth, that we owe him obedience as vnto our Lord.

3. But because hee requireth of vs, not a constrained but a voluntary and willing obedience, he allureth vs vnto it, by a rehearſal of his loue towards vs, & that is propounded in theſe words, *thy God*, that is to ſay, which doth embrace thee with good will and fauour.

Finally, he bringeth forth a notable testimony of that loue, when he ſaith; Which brought thee out of the Land of *Ægypt*, out of the houſe of bondage. In which words he declareth the ſelfe ſame thing, as if hee ſhould ſay; I haue deliuered you from the tyranny of the Diuell and ſinne, that I might bring you to eternall life. For, that temporall benefit in times paſt beſtowed vpon the people of *Israel*, was a type or figure of the ſpirituall deliuerance of the Church.

Theoph. But the Lord ſeemeth not to ſpeake to vs in theſe words, Heare *Israel*, but onely to the *Israelites* that came of *Abraham* and *Iacob*, to whom the name of *Israell* was giuen by the Angell.

Gal. 3.7.

Mat. The Apoſtle witneſſeth, that all they that bee of faith, are the children of *Abraham*. And therefore in the name of *Israel*, all the faithfull are ſpoken vnto: and yet not that the vnfaithfull and vnbeleeuers are exempted from keeping of the Law; but becauſe they haue not eares to heare, much leſſe an heart to vnderſtand, therefore the Lord ſpeaketh not vnto them.

Theoph. I haue attained the ſenſe and meaning of this Preface. Now declare thoſe generall rules, which thou ſaidſt gaue light to the vnderſtanding of the Law.

Mat. They be three. The firſt whereof is this, that when God commandeth good, he doth not onely forbid the euill that is contrary vnto it, which alſo is done in the lawes of men; but when he forbiddeth euill, he commandeth the good that is contrary vnto it: and this is peculiar or proper to the law of God. For example. When God forbid- deth vs to take his name in vaine, he doth on the contrary ſide command that we hallow and honour it. When hee forbiddeth, that any man ſteale, he commandeth vs to giue our ſelues vnto charity. And ſo of the reſt of the commandements.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why are almost all the commaundements deliuered rather negatiuely than affirmatiuely, that is to say, so as they rather forbid euill, than command that which is good?

Mat. Indeed that is well marked of you: for onely two, namely the last of the first Table, wherein the obseruation of the Sabbath day, and the first of the second Table, wherein the honour of parents be commanded, bee propounded affirmatiuely, all the rest negatiuely, and so forbid euill. But this was done that we might vnderstand, that no man can giue his mind to that which is good, before he haue laid aside the euill that is contrary to it. Euen as we see that thornes must bee first pulled vp, before good seed be sown. Therefore the Prophet calling the Israelites to repentance saith; Plough vp your fallow ground, and sow not among thornes. Moreouer, euery where in the holy scriptures is this order kept, that it first forbid-
deth euill, before it command good: as where the Pro-
phets say: Cease to doe euill, learne to doe well; Decline
from euill, and doe that which is good.

Ier. 4. 3.

Esa. i. 16.

Psal. 34. 15.

Theoph. Let vs come to the second rule.

Mat. The Lord minding to forbid diuers euils of the same kind, he comprehended them in the name of the greatest, and as it were the chiefest, to the end we might know, that the sins which seeme to bee most small by the iudgement of men, are accounted with God of the same nature with that vnder the which they be forbidden: As for example. When God would forbid murders, reuen-
ges, iniuries, and priuie hatreds, he comprehended them
all vnder the word *Murder*, to teach vs, that he which ha-
reth his brother, is a murderer, as *Iohn* saith. The same is
to be said of him, which looketh vpon a woman to lust af-
ter her: for Christ affirmeth that such a one hath commit-
ted adultery in his heart.

1. Iob. 3. 15.

Mat. 5. 13.

Theoph. The third rule is behind.

Mat. When any vice is forbidden, not onely they bee forbidden that be of the same kind, but also all the degrees by the which men come vnto them, yea & all such things, which by any meanes may minister occasion of our falling into such vices. On the contrary side, when vertue is com-
manded,

manded, all those things also be commanded, that may draw vs on forward to it.

Theoph. Hauing now deliuered those generall rules, wee are to consider the coherence or agreement of the foure commandements of the first Table, according to the order which you did prescribe.

How the four
commande-
ments of the
first Table a-
gree together

Mat. I did therefore set down this order, because it will bring greater light to each commaundement. Thou hast heard already, that in the first Table, God hath commanded the worship due vnto him. Seeing therefore we ought to worship him no lesse in our bodies, than in our soules, as he that is a creator of both,

In the first commandement, hee setteth out the duty of our soule: for he sheweth what inward knowledge hee requireth of vs.

In the second, he reformeth the disposition and behaviour of our bodies, in the things which appertain to his worship. And together condemneth idolatry, wherein men doe chiefly sinne against this commandement.

In the third, hee restraineth our speech: for by it wee ought also to declare that inward worship.

In the fourth he appointeth a certaine day of the weeke wherein those things may be called to practise, as well those before mentioned, as those also which bee commanded in the latter Table; and this indeed is the cause, why it is placed betweene both the Tables.

The first Commandement.

Thou shalt haue no other Gods before my face.

Theoph. Let vs at length come to the speciall exposition of the first commaundement. What the meaning of it is, it is sufficiently vnderstood by that which hath been saide. Let vs therefore see what be the parts of it, then let vs follow each of them in their order.

Mat. Seeing this commandement is deliuered Negatiuely, by our first rule it containeth the Affirmatiue vnder it. Therefore it is to be diuided into two parts.

1. In the first, which is not expressed, hee will haue vs to acknowledge him for our God.

2. In the latter, which is indeed expressed, hee forbid-
deth

death that we acknowledge any other for our God, beside himselfe.

Theoph. Of how many parts standeth that acknowledgement which God requireth?

Mat. Vpon foure: namely, .

1. Adoration, or worship.
2. Trust.
3. Inuocation, or praier.
4. And thanksgiuing.

Now this acknowledgement proceedeth from knowledge: for he cannot be acknowledged, except hee be first knowen.

Theoph. Shew this vnto me in those seuerall parts.

Mat. First, we cannot worship him (now, he is worshipped when euery one of vs submitteth himselfe to his greatness) vnlesse we also acknowledge him our Creator and Lord. We cannot put our trust in him, but wee must confesse him to be omnipotent & perfectly good, that hee may helpe our necessities. Wee will neuer thinke vpon praying and giuing thanks vnto him, except wee be well assured, that he is the fountaine and well-spring of all good things.

Theoph. Are these foure vertues onely included in the first commandement?

Mat. If thou respect the substance, these onely: howbeit many other spring from them. For true adoration or worship, hath alwaies piety adioyned with it, that is to say, a child-like feare, and willing obedience towards him.

Out of trust, ariseth

1. Hope, that is, a certaine looking for the fruition of the heavenly promises.
2. Patience in aduersitie.
3. Perseuerance, or continuance in his seruice.
4. A holy security, so long as we keepe our selues within the bounds of our callings.

From praier and thanksgiuing springeth true humilitie of heart. For by them we be admonished, that we are empty of all kinde of good things, vntill God bestow them vpon vs, and that if there be any good thing in vs, it is of God. That humility also bringeth forth modesty, which causeth vs not to desire a higher place, but to bee content

with the condition whereunto God hath called vs.

Theo. Forasmuch as wee haue reckoned vp the vertues contained in this commandement, now wee must oppose or set against them, the vices whereunto they be contrary.

Mat. These are,

1. Rebellion against God.
2. Doubting of his promises.
3. Desperation.
4. Impatience in aduersitie.
5. Inconstancy in the worshippe of God, and in our owne vocation.
6. Falling away from the truth of the Gospell.
7. Pride.
8. Disdaine.
9. Ambition.
10. Faint heartednesse in good things, and finally rashnesse, which aduentureth vpon vnecessary dangers, vnder a colour of Gods prouidence.

The latter
part of the
first commandement.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Now in it is forbidden, that we acknowledge any other but the true God. How do we fall into this sinne?

Mat. When wee giue vnto creatures those foure points, or any of them: for then wee make them our gods, when we ascribe the things vnto them, which appertaine to one God. Therefore in this commandement the Lord saith not; Thou shalt acknowledge me for thy God; but, Thou shalt haue no other gods before mee: but in these words he compriseth three things:

First, that we ought to haue one God.

Secondly, that himselfe is he, whom we are to acknowledge for our God, euen as it is plainly expressed by him in the Preface, in these words, I am the Lord thy God.

Thirdly, that it is not sufficient if wee acknowledge him for our God; except we acknowledge him alone, so as wee ioyne no other gods as it were fellowes vnto him, which they doe especially, that pray vnto Saints, and put their trust in them, whatsoeuer they may pretend, or howsoeuer they may seeke to shift the matter.

Theo. Is it not also forbidden, that we should in any case put our trust in the liuing? as for example, in our kinsfolks
and

and friends, to craue their helpe if need be, or to giue them thanks for the benefits which we haue receiued?

Mat. No, not so, so as wee acknowledge them onely as instruments, by which God will helpe vs, and that they haue their will and abilitie to doe vs good from God: for then we put not our trust in the creature, but in the Creator himselfe, in whom only we confesse is power to helpe vs: without whom men can haue no helpe at all for vs. Notwithstanding it is meet, that we doe giue them thanks, so often as wee receiue any benefit from them, so long as we remember that the chiefe thanks are to be reserued vnto God, the true giuer of all gifts.

Theoph. What if we put our trust in creatures more than in the Creator?

Mat. Then be they our gods: therefore *Paul* speaking of couetousnesse, calleth it idolatrie: by which words hee meaneth, that couetous men make their riches their gods, because they trust in them more than in God himselfe. Which indeede is not onely true in that, but also as oft as wee preferre any other creature before the Creator, whether wee feare, loue, or obey it more. for then wee make it our God. Therefore *Paul* speaking of such, who, that they may liue daintily and securely, cast off the seruice of God, saith; Their God is their belly.

Col. 3. 5.

Theoph. I thinke that to be the meaning of Christ, when he saith: Call no man your father on the earth, for one is your father which is in heauen.

Phil. 3. 19.

Mat. 23. 9.

Mat. It is so indeed: for in those words he doth not onely warne vs to acknowledge God for the chiefe father, but especially to loue, feare, and worship him farre aboue our earthly parents, and all other that be set ouer vs.

Theoph. Now do I vnderstand in what maner we should seeke for helpe at the hands of men, and trust in them without diminishing the honour of God. But what letteth vs that we may not doe the same towards the Saints who are already receiued into heauen, that is to say, call vpon them, and in some sort put our trust in them, vpon condition, that wee take them as instruments appointed of God for our helpe?

Mat. God verily giueth this abilitie to those that bee a-

Eccles. 9. 6.

liue, yea he hath commanded that one should helpe another : but this cannot bee in the dead : for *Salomon* saith ; Also their loue, and their hatred, and their enuie is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the sunne.

Theoph. How knowest thou, that God hath not giuen this power to the dead, to bee able to helpe vs, and that therefore we ought not to pray vnto them, when any necessity presseth vs ?

Jer. 17. 10.

Psal. 7. 10.

Mat. There is no one example of this in all the Scripture, which notwithstanding is the most certaine rule of truth. Moreover, it teacheth vs, that God onely knoweth the things that be absent, and vnderstandeth the heart of man, so as hee heareth and fauourably heareth our prayers and complaints, and helpeth vs.

Wherefore no man can call vpon the dead, or can any way trust in them, but he taketh away the honour due vnto God, which he giueth vnto them, and therefore maketh them his God.

Psal. 91. 11.

Heb. 1. 14.

Theoph. If it will bee none otherwise, the things which haue beene spoken of the dead, seeme not to appertaine vnto the Angels, specially seeing that it is manifest by the testimonie of the scripture, that God oftentimes vseth their seruice to helpe vs, and that they bee conuersant amongst vs, so as they may heare our prayers.

Therefore it shall be no hurt, if wee call vpon them to helpe vs, as we doe vpon the liuing, yet with this condition, that wee take them only for his instruments appointed by himselfe.

Mat. Thou gatherest ill, for they cannot helpe vs, saue in those things which God hath expressely commanded them, which indecde bee vnknown vnto vs. But forasmuch as they do most readily performe the things they be commanded, it is not necessarie to call vpon them, although we our selues knew those things. Howbeit it is altogether necessarie to speake to the liuing heere vpon the earth, because for the most part they scarce yeeld any help except they bee so called vpon that it trouble them. But whereas thou saidst, that the Angels be amongst vs, doe vnderstand what we need, & heare our prayers, it is indeed true,

erue. Neuertheles they cannot be euery where, nor know all things, for that is proper to God only: which is a cause that we ought not to pray vnto them. But although all the things which we haue alledged were of no force; there is no commandement of it in all the Scripture, nor any example whereby we may be enformed, that worshipping of Angels is pleasing to God. And *Paul* affirmeth, that whatsoever is done without faith, is sinne.

Rom. 14. 23.

Theoph. Now the exposition of this commandement wanteth this one thing, that thou shew why these words be added, In my sight, or before me.

Mat. That he might more and more keepe vs from the transgressing of it, while he teacheth how great iniury is done to his Maiesty, when we dare commit so hainous an offence euen in his presence. For, although impiety and vngodlinesse be hidden in the heart, yet it is manifest to the eyes of the Lord, whereunto all things are naked and open, saith the Apostle. It is therefore as if an vn honest woman should prouoke and set on fire the minde of her husband, by bringing before his face the party with whom she plaiceth the harlot, and by committing of the very act of vncleannesse in his presence.

Heb. 4. 13.

The second Commandement.

Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen Image, nor the likenesse of the things that be in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that be in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bow downe to them nor worship them. For I the Lord thy God am a ialous God, visiting the sinnes of the fathers vpon the children, to the third and fourth generation of them that hate mee, and shewing mercy to thousands of them that loue me, and keepe my commandements.

Theop. Thou hast satisfied me concerning the first commandement: let vs go forward to the second. How many parts hath it?

Mat. Three.

1. The first of the forbidding of the things wherein a man may sinne in the outward worship due vnto God.

2. The second is of things commanded, which are to be

performed in the profession of that worship, which is done by the outward behaviour of the body : and this precept is comprehended vnder the prohibition by the first general rule.

3. The third containeth threatnings against the breakers of the Law, and setteth before vs a promise to such as keepe it.

Theoph. Let vs in the first place consider of that prohibition.

Mat. It is contained in these words: Thou shalt not make to thy selfe any grauen image, neither any likenesse of the things that bee in heauen aboue, nor of the things that be in the earth beneath, nor of the things that bee in the waters vnder the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them.

Theoph. Why, after the words, Thou shalt make thee no grauen image, is it presently added, Nor any likenesse?

Mat. It is, that we may know, that pictures painted, or any other kinde of images, be forbidden of God, no lesse than grauen images, which are by name mentioned.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou by the things that are in heauen?

Mat. The sunne, moone, stars, birds : & vnder the things that be vppon the earth are comprehended, men, brute beasts, plants, trees: and finally by those that be in the waters, fishes. Moreouer the waters that is the sea, are saide to be vnder the earth, in respect of men that doe inhabit it: for otherwise the sea together with the earth, make a globe, wherof there is not one part higher or lower than another.

Theo. Why should God thus reckon vp all his creatures?

Mat. Because there was no kind of them, which the heathen did not at that time abuse to idolatry : which custome the Iewes themselves followed, notwithstanding this prohibition giuen them.

Theoph. But in this place there is no mention of spirituall and heauenly things, whereof neuerthelesse there is very often abuse among the heathen to idolatry.

Mat. True. But heere is no mention of them, because they cannot be represented, but by borrowing the forme or shape of the visible things, which in this place are reckoned

Ezec. 8. 2.

3. &c.

kened vp. Therefore vnder the visible, the invisible also are comprehended.

Theoph. But are all kinds of pictures and images forbidden of God?

Mat. They are vtterly condemned, if they be made to represent his maiesty: for that is directly forbidden by him.

Deut. 4. 15.

Act. 17. 28

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because it cannot be done but to the contempt of his diuine Maiesty, forasmuch as he which is eternall, infinite, without body, and inuisible, is represented in the likeness of a fraile and transitory creature, finite, hauing a body, and being visible. For this cause *Esay* going about to reprove the madnesse of the idolaters of his time, that did set forth God in a visible shape, describeth his wonderful greatnesse, howbeit in termes agreeable to our capacity, when he saith: Who hath measured the waters in the fitt, and compassed heauen with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountaines in a waight, and the hills in a ballance; And a little after he addeth: To whom then will ye make God like, or what similitude will ye set vp vnto him?

Esa. 40. 12.

Esa. 40. 18.

Theoph. I grant that God is not to be set out in any visible shape: but why may it not bee lawfull so to represent things created?

Mat. It is lawfull: so long as it is not done to adore or worship them: which the Lord straightway addeth after the forbidding of making images, in these words: Thou shalt not bow downe to them, nor worship them.

Theoph. Thinkest thou that it is all one for a man to bow himselfe to idols, and to adore or worship them?

Mat. Yea verily. For adoration signifieth all religious worship: but no man boweth himselfe to idols, but with religious worship.

Theo. What vnderstandest thou by the name of worship?

Mat. That they be not apparelled and decked; that incense be not burnt to them, temples built, altars set vp, holidays kept, and such like.

Theoph. Therefore it is lawfull to haue any images, so as it be not to adoration and worship, except those that be made to represent God.

Mat.

1 John. 5. 21

Mat. All religious images bee also to bee excepted, by the precept of our third rule, lest men abuse them to idolatry, being of their owne nature aboue measure prone to that wickednesse. Which thing gaue *Iohn* occasion that in the end of his Epistle, hee ioyned this admonition. Babes keepe your selues from idols, that is, from images made for religious vse.

Theoph. But they may teach the ignorant people, according to the common speech: Images are vnlarned mens bookes.

Gal. 3. 1.

Mat. They be indeed the bookes of the vnlearned; For they can teach nothing but vanity and lying: as the Scripture testifieth: and therefore they hold men in ignorance, and make them idiots and vnlearned, which experience it selfe proueth. But the most sure way whereby all the faithful of what degree soeuer, may be taught, and that with profit, is that which the Lord himselfe hath appointed, that is, the preaching of his worde by the which *Paul* saith, that Christ is painted before our eyes.

Theoph. Let vs go forward: Is there no euill forbidden in the commandement, besides the adoration and worshipping of Images?

Mat. Two other besides forbidden, namely

1. Worshipping of creatures: and
2. Superstition.

Theoph. What cause hast thou to say that these two euils be forbidden in this commandement?

Mat. Because they be of the same kinde with idolatry: for they tend hereunto, to declare by the outward gesture of the body, the worship which they thinke they giue vnto God. Whereupon it is that these two bee called by the name of idolatry.

Theoph. Right. For both the worshippers of creatures and superstitious persons, haue accustomedly beene called idolaters, as well as the worshippers of idols.

Mat. And verily they be ioyned together, by a most neer bond: for idolatry alwaies accompanieth the worshipping of creatures, and bringeth forth sundry superstitions.

Theoph. Let vs speake of these two euils: What vnderstandest thou by the adoration of creatures?

Mat.

Of the adoration of creatures.

Mat. The religious worship which is giuen vnto them.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because adoration belongeth onely vnto God, wherof the Scripture it selfe is a plentifull witnesse. Whereupon it followeth, that we can bestow neuer so little of it, vpon any creature, whether it bee visible or inuisible, of what condition soeuer, but we doe take from and diminish the worship due to the Creator. Therefore the Angell said vnto *John*, which had fallen downe at his feet to worship him; See thou doe it not, I am thy fellow seruant, one of thy brethren; worship God.

Apo. 19. 10.

Theoph. But dost thou comprehend vnder that prohibition, the worship and reuerence which is vsually giuen to men that be aliue?

Mat. No verily, so long as it be only ciuill; for if there be neuer so little affection mingled tending to religion, it is corrupt, and displeaseth God. For this cause *Peter* refused the reuerence which *Cornelius* did to him: for the holy Apostle perceiued, that that reuerence was not meere ciuill, but had mixed with it some sauouring of Religion. Now if it be vnlawfull to worship Saints, yea the very Angels themselues, how much more vnlawfull is it to worship their images, reliques, the Crosse of Christ, the likeness of it, and such like?

Act. 10. 16.

Theoph. Let vs come to superstition: what meanest thou by this word?

Superstition.

Mat. It is called Superstition, when any worshipping God by rites or ceremonies deuised of mē. Of this sort are

1. To weare a certaine kinde of apparell for Religion sake.
2. To hold difference of place in worshipping God.
3. To obserue daies and times for that purpose.
4. To make a difference of meats.
5. To abstaine from marriage: and such other inuentions of men, wherof *Paul* thus ipeaketh, Which things haue indeede a shew of wisdom, in voluntarie religion, and humblenesse of minde, and in not sparing of the bodie; yet they are not any thing worth. Yea rather they are to the contempt of God, and hinder our saluation.

Col. 2. 23.

Theoph. How are they to the contempt of God?

Mat.

Mat. 15. 9.

Mat. Because he preferreth obedience before sacrifice, and will bee worshipped not after the inuentions of men, but according to his owne will, which hee hath therefore made known vnto vs. Therefore Christ said to the Scribes and Pharisees, They worship mee in vaine, teaching doctrines that bee the commandements of men. Moreover, superstitions bring in the contempt of Gods commandements, and of that worship, which he requireth of vs to performe vnto him, which experience doth plentifully proue.

Theoph. But how do superstitions hinder our saluation?

1. Tim. 4.

Mat. Because superstitious persons imagine, that they merit somewhat by them; which imagination turneth men from Christ, and therefore from their owne saluation. For that cause *Paul* calleth the forbidding of meats and of mariage, the doctrine of diuels. It is therefore a great deale better to goe on slowly in the waies of the Lord, than to runne apace in the waies of superstition: which whosoever hath entred into, the further he goeth forward the further hee goeth from God, and therefore from eternal life.

Theoph. Now I vnderstand what superstition is.

But, seeing there bee three euils by the which the worship of God is defiled, I demand why idolatrie onely is shortly touched in this commandement?

Mat. It is according to our second rule, namely, that God when he meaneth to forbid many sinnes of the same kinde, forbiddeth them all vnder the name of one, and that the greatest, such a one as idolatrie is.

Theoph. Why thinkest thou idolatrie to be a greater sin, than the worshipping of creatures, or superstition?

Psal. 115. 4.

Mat. The reason in my iudgement is most plaine. For although a man be mad already, when he forsaketh God, for some excellent gifts wherewith any creature hath beene adorned of God, and worshippeth that creature: yet then he may be said to be sore vexed with madnes and outrage when he worshippeth an idoll, made by the industrie of man. Therefore the Scripture describing that vanity, calleth idols the workes of mens hands, and presently after addeth: They haue a mouth and speake not; they haue eies and see not; they haue eares and heare not; they haue noses

noſes and ſmell not; they haue hands and handle not; they haue feete and walke not; and finally that they be dead: In which words he ſignifieth, that men be altogether out of their wits, which worſhip the worke of mans hands, an image, dumbe, blinde, deafe, that vnderſtanderh nothing, and is voide of all the ſenſes, and therefore inferior to his maker and worſhipper: which appeareth euen by this, that neither of them would be like their idoll.

Theop. But they that worſhip images, wil not grant thee that thou ſaiſt, namely, that they worſhip the images, much leſſe take them for gods. For they ſay, they be not ſo void of reaſon, but they know, they be either of wood, or ſtone, or of painting. But rather they affirme boldly, and conſtantly, that all the worſhip which they doe, tendeth to the honour of God, or of the Saints, whereof they be images.

Against wor-
ſhipping of I-
dols.

Mat. What though wee ſhould grant them all that they ſay? were not this extreame madneſſe, that they will worſhip God, by doing the things which hee directly forbid-
deth? Which alſo he affirmeth to be deſpight againſt him? But howſoeuer they deny it, it is ſo. For when they preferre one idoll before an other, and for religions ſake take vpon them long pilgrimages to ſalute ſuch an image, and doe mumble their prayers before them, euen as for that purpoſe they haue many images with them; it is clearer than the light, that they thinke there is in them ſome diuine power: And therefore they be cōuincied that they take thoſe images for Gods. Whereupon *Eſay* moſt ſharply reprooued the Idolaters of his time, although they euen then ſought the ſame ſhifts. So is the diuell wont to bewitch all thoſe, that receiue idols for religions ſake: for at the beginning indeed, he perſwadeth the, that they be receiued that God may be worſhipped in them; but by little & little, he blindeth them with their mad religion, ſo as at the length they both worſhip them, and put their truſt in them. And indeed (as *Auſtin* ſaid moſt truly) no man looking vpon Images, can doe them any worſhip, who is not verily perſwaded in his heart that they heare him.

Eſay 44.17.

For this cauſe, the Fathers of the Elibertine Councell, the yeere from the birth of Chriſt 330. decreed thus concerning this matter; It is ordained that no pictures bee had

Cap. 6 &
Can. 31.

had in Churches, lest that which is honoured and worshipped bee painted on the walles; against those which then would haue images placed in Churches.

Theoph. How then came it to passe, that afterward they were receiued into Churches?

Mat. It was decreed after many contentions and iars in the last Councell of *Nice*, about the yeere 754. when the diuell had before brought in many superstitions into the Church: But it lacked images all the time, from the coming of Iesus Christ, vntill that Councell.

Theoph. Truly I am glad, that in going ouer these things, I haue learned at what time images were brought into the Church. Now I will returne againe to the order of our speech. Thou saiedst, that in former times the old Idolaters vsed the same excuses to defend their Idolatries, which the Idolaters of our times doe vse now: who do specially complaine of this, that they haue very great wrong done them, when they be compared with those ancients, forasmuch as there is great difference betweene themselves and the other.

Mat. If it shall seeme good vnto thee to propound the things wherein they say that difference is, I will cause thee to vnderstand, that whatsoever they alledge is most vaine: and moreouer, that the Idolatry of our time, is altogether the same, with that ancient Idolatry of the heathen and Iewes.

Theoph. It shall very much please mee to heare that of thee. But they make foure principall points or heads of that difference.

1. First, that those ancients, both Heathen and Iewes, (say they) beleueed their images to be gods, which we doe not beleuee.

2. Secondly, they worshipped many gods, we only one

3. Thirdly, because they worshipped the images of things without sense and reason, or else of most wicked men and women, as Iupiter, Mars, Venus, and many other such like: and those Images (say they) be forbidden in this commandement, but not the Images which we worship, as of Christ, the virgin *Mary*, and of the Saints that now liue most blessedly in heauen.

4. Fourthly

The excuses
of the newer
Idolaters.

4. Fourthly, and last of all, wee giue not that diuine worship to our images, which in former times the Idolaters gaue to their idols and fained gods. Vpon which things they gather, that indeede those ancients are worthily called and esteemed idolaters: but that they haue great iniurie done vnto them, when they bee charged with this fault, from the which they thinke themselves free, vpon the reasons which I haue reckened vp.

Mat. I will answer in order vnto these foure points.

1. First, they be foully deceiued in this, that they thinke those old idolaters beleued their idols to be gods: for they changed them according to their pleasure, but they alwaies kept the same gods in their minde.

2. Moreouer, there was no god of theirs, which had not many images: and yet they did not according to that multitude, make to themselves many gods.

3. Finally, they did daily consecrate new images: yet had they no purpose and intent to make new gods. Whereupon it is plaine, that they were not so blockish and without sense to beleue, that an idoll of stone, or of wood, or of gold, or of siluer, was the very essence of God: but onely a similitude or likenesse of God.

It is indeed certaine, that the Prophets sometimes re-
prooued the Israelites for this, that they said to their idols:
Thou art my God. But this was done for the cause which
I spake of before: namely, for that giuing to images the
honour due vnto God alone, they esteemed them as God,
although they coloured that idolatry with faire excuses.

Theoph. Concerning the first point, thou hast sufficiently
satisfied me. Let vs therefore come to the second; name-
ly, that the Heathen had many gods.

Mat. That indeed is true, but they did neuer esteeme
them alike: but rather constantly continued in this mind,
that there was one chiefe God, to whom all the rest were
subiect. For, so is the feeling of one God-head engrauen in
the minds of men, that it cannot bee pluckt out, albeit it
be corrupted by their owne witlesse inuentions, and that
more is, by their idolatry, as *Paul* saith to the Romanes.

Therefore the other gods, whom they adored besides
that chiefe God, were for this end worshipped, that they
might

The answer
to the excuses
of the newer
Idolaters.

Rom. 7.

might be their patrons : which selfe same thing they also do at this day which adore men saints, and women saints. For they take them in the stead of their gods , when they giue that worship to their reliques and images , which is due vnto one highest God.

Theoph. Let vs now come to the third point : and it is this; That the prohibition which is contained in this commandment, is vnderstood onely of those idols , which are the likenesses of fained Gods, which the old Ethnicks and Iewes, being Idolaters, did worship ; and that it doth not extend to the Images of the Saints that be in heauen.

Mat. This distinction is most false: for εἰδωλον in Greeke is altogether the same, that image is in Latine. But both do signifie the likenesses which are made vpon foolish deuotion. Whereupon it is, that they who worship them are called εἰδωλολάτραι, that is, worshippers of Idols or Images.

But let vs grant there is that difference or diuersity betwene these words which they affirme, what will it make for them ? forasmuch as there is so generall a prohibition in this commandment, Thou shalt make to thy selfe no grauen image, neither any likeness of the things, &c. that it admitteth no exception or restraint. For it doth plainly comprehend euery religious likeness of al things, as well liuing as without sense, reasonable or vnreasonable, men & women, as well which now liue blessedly in heauen , as of the wicked , which now suffer the torments of their sinnes in hell. For the difference of the things to which the worship due to God, is giuen, taketh not away the reproch and iniury done vnto God.

Theoph. Now, what answerest thou to the last point, namely, that they giue not the same worship to their idols, which in times past the ancient Ethnicks gaue to their fained gods?

Mat. I answer, that they be altogether alike: which shall plainly appeare, if we do a little more diligently looke into both, and make a comparison betweene them.

A comparing
of the old and
new idolaters

I The Ethnicks sacrificed to their idols : so also doe the idolaters of our time. For they say Masses, (which they hold to be sacrifices) to the honour of Saints , yea at their Altars.

2 They

2. They offered them gifts, and so also do our idolaters.

3. They saluted them, they fell down vpon their knees before them, and finally made their praiers vnto them. Which thing also is diligently obserued and done by the idolaters of our time.

4. They called vpon some for the plague, vpon other some for the safe deliuerance of women, other some for tempests vpon the sea, other some to obtaine raine, and other some for faire weather: so also doe our idolaters.

5. They apparelled them, they set vp lights to them, they burnt incense: the same also do our idolaters.

6. They carried them about in their solemne supplications, they followed them most deuoutly, beeing caried vpon mens shoulders, and to this purpose, that they might obtaine their requests. The same also is vsed among our Idolaters.

7. They appointed vnto them formes of praiers and worship, they built them Churches, and ordained Priests, of whom their seruice might be done: so also doe ours.

8. They sought high places, and places vnresorted to by men, planted with trees, wherein they built the Chapels of their idols. By meanes whereof, wretched men (made drunke with blinde deuotion) were so out of their wits, that there was very great resort of people vnto them, no otherwise than as if God himselfe had beene present there. The Idolaters of our time haue carefully done all these things to the very selfe-same end.

9. In each city and towne one was chosen, to be the patron of the place, and the protecting God. The same also doe ours.

10. They swore by their names, and had them continually in their mouth, and alwaies caried about with them their images to worship. The same also doe our idolaters. To conclude, at length the names of the idols were changed, but the same idolatry is still retained.

But we must diligently marke the craft of Sathan in this behalfe. For, to the end hee might restore and bring in againe the old idolatry, he hath borrowed the names of the holy Apostles and Martyrs, by whom in former times it was ouerthrowen and driuen away, and by this meanes it

hath put on another person, that it might not be knowen.

Theoph. I haue taken no small pleasure by that which thou hast spoken vpon these foure points. Now, that our speech may end there where it begunne, I doe acknowledge that the Diuell, which in our age hath brought in againe the ancient idolatry, vpholdeth it by no other arguments, than those wherewith in former times it was defended by him.

Mat. It is euen so. For, whereas the Idolaters of our age deuising a worship of God and images of Saints, pretend and say, that the remembrance of God is the better engrauen in their minds, the selfe same thing was pretended by those old idolaters.

Theo. It is very likely that men euen from the beginning were by these two reasons moued to idolatry: namely, that both they might worship God better, and deeply fasten the remembrance of him in their mindes.

Mat. But there is nothing which is more to the dishonour of God, and more putteth him out of the mindes of men, than idolatry.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because there can bee no greater despite done to God, than (contrary to his expresse forbidding) to giue the worship due to him, vnto dumbe and dead images, which also we may liken to fetters, snares, or gins, wherewith men be held fast vpon the ground, beeing lets and hinderances to their minds, that they looke not vp to heauen, neither come to God with true knowledge, and remembrance of him.

Theoph. I desire, if it shall not be troublesome to you, to alledge three obiections, wherewith idolaters labour to defend themselues: not that I make any doubt of things so plaine, but to the end I may be able fitly to answer the aduersaries, if at any time I haue occasion.

Mat. Thou shalt not trouble me, though thou enlarge this speech: for I am much delighted when any occasion is giuen me, to discouer the craft of the diuell; who vnder colour of Religion and worshipping of God, bringeth it to passe, that he himselfe is worshipped of idolaters. Therefore propound those obiections.

Theoph.

Theoph. The first of them is this, that they giue not to the images the adoration or worship due vnto God: For they say, they giue to images only that worship which they call *δουλεία*, and that they doe reserue *λατρεία* vnto God.

Mat. This distinction is nothing else but a matter fained of the Greeks, as it may appeare by the words themselves being Greeke, wherewith they might cloke the vngodlines of the idolatry brought into the church by them. Howbeit by this distinction they meant that they worshipped God, and serued the images. But their deedes declare that the matter is farre otherwise. For if it were their purpose to worship the images with the worship which they say is to be reserued for God, what would they doe more, seeing they fall downe vpon their knees, and most deuoutly salute them whensoever they come in their sight?

But let vs grant that the idols (as they say) be not worshipped, but serued of them, are they not in expresse words condemned of God by the prohibition of this commandement, when after these words; *Thou shalt not bow downe to them*, the Lord straightway addeth, *Neither shalt thou serue them*? Which things being so, it is plaine that this distinction is most frivoulous, and that it is onely in words, by the which they would blind the eies of the simple, especially seeing it is certaine that the Scripture vseth those words, *δουλεία* and *λατρεία* for the selfe same thing, and attributeth both of them vnto God.

Theo. Now I come to their other obiection, which is of the Cherubins, and the brasen serpent that were made by God his owne commandement. The Cherubins to couer the arke of the couenant, but the brasen serpent was set vp in the wilderness, that such as were stung by the biting of the serpents, by the sight thereof might be healed, and deliuered from present death. And from hence they will conclude, that it is lawfull to haue images in churches.

Mat. These examples doe not any thing at all serue their turne. For God himselfe had commanded the Cherubines, as also the brasen Serpent, not indeed to be adored or worshipped, but to represent or signifie some things fit for that time, when the Ceremoniall law was in vse. For the Cherubins were in that holy inner place,

The first obiection of the Idolaters of our time.

The answer to it.

Rom. 1. 19. &

7. 6. & 12.

11.

The second obiection.

Exo. 25. 18.

Nam. 31. 8.

The answer.

2. Kin. 18. 4.

which is called the holiest of all, out of the sight of all, save onely of the high Priest, who went into it onely once every yeere: so as all occasion of abusing them was taken away. Concerning the brasen Serpent, *Ezekias* is specially commended of the holy Ghost, for that hee brake it, because after a sort it was worshipped of the people. Now therefore with what face dare they alledge these examples to vphold their Images, set vp contrary to the expresse commandement of God? seeing especially there is so filthy an abuse of them vnto all kind of Idolatry.

Theoph. But what did the Cherubins, and the brasen serpent signifie?

Mat. Euery Cherubin had foure wings: with two they couered their face, whereby was taught, that the Angels themselues be so stricken with that brightnesse of the diuine Maiesty, that they cannot endure it, and so bee compelled to couer their faces: with the other two wings they couered the mercy seat which was vpon the Arke, to instruct vs that God is incomprehensible, and therefore ought not to bee represented by any humane likenesse. Touching the brasen Serpent, God signified by it, that all they whom that old serpent (namely the diuell, with whose poison, and that indeed deadly, wee are infected through sinne) had bitten, were healed, so as by faith they doe flie vnto Christs death. For the brasen Serpent was a figure of Christ, as the Lord himselfe teacheth in these words; As *Moses* lifted vp the Serpent in the wildernesse, so must the Sonne of man be lifted vp, that whosocuer beleueth in him, should not perish, but haue life euerlasting.

John 3. 24.

The third objection.

Theoph. I am satisfied for the second objection: the third is behinde, wherein they alledge almost innumerable miracles, which were wrought in fauour of the worshippers of idols, and for the punishment of such as despise them.

The answer.

Valer.

Max. lib. I.

cap. 2.

Mat. Although I might most worthily reiect the greatest part of those miracles as false and fained, yet will I grant this, that they may be all taken for miracles indeed. But what can they build with them? might not the heathen boast the selfe same thing of their idols? let prophane histories be reade, they will affoord infinite examples of those

those things, neither indeed is it maruell. For, the diuell, to the end hee might establish his owne false doctrine, would therein follow God.

Theoph. How?

Mat. As God when hee meant to open his truth vnto men, sent forth true Prophets and Apostles to preach it; and furnished them with the power of the Holy Ghost, that they might confirme it by sundry miracles: so the diuell the father of lies assaied the same thing, when hee would bring in idolatrie and superstition into the world. For, he raised vp false Prophets and Apostles to preach it, and gaue them the power of working miracles, for the confirmation of it. Heereupon it is, that Christ warneth vs, diligently to take heede of false Prophets, who (saith hee) shall doe great signes and miracles, so as they shall deceiue (if it were possible) the very elect. Whereunto also may be applied the saying of the Apostle speaking of Antichrist: Whose comming is by the working of Sathan, with all power and signes, and lying wonders?

Mat. 24. 24.

2. Thes. 2. 9

Theo. Why doth the Apostle call them lying wonders?

Mat. Not so much to note the falsehood of them, as to giue vs to vnderstand of the end whereat those miracles doe shoot: and that is to confirme most false and lying doctrine, such as are idolatrie & superstition, which are directly contrary to Gods word, which indeed ought to bee vnto vs in stead of a touchstone, whereby to discern true miracles from false; that we be not deceiued by them.

Theoph. Thou thinkest therefore that all miracles, which serue to confirme false doctrine, are wrought by the diuell, and are therefore to be refused as lies and done to deceiue.

Mat. I thinke so. And for this cause, doth the Lord warne vs by Moses, if there arise in the midst of vs a Prophet, that foresheweth things to come, or sheweth any other signes with purpose to turne vs aside from his worship, that we doe not heare such a Prophet. For the Lord your God (saith he) prooueth you, to see whether you loue him with all your heart.

*Deu. 13. 1.
2. 3.*

Theoph. But how can the diuell haue the power to worke miracles, which appertaineth only to God?

Mat. The Lord looseth the bridle vnto him, and giueth that

2 The. 2. 11.

that power, that so he may auenge himselfe, vpon those which despise and refuse his truth; of whom *Paul* thus writeth; Therefore will the Lord send them strong delusions, that they may beleue lies.

The other
part of the
2. commandement.

Theoph. Thou hast now satisfied me concerning the first part of this commandement: and those abuses haue been discussed in it, which are wont to be brought into the worship of God, but chiefly the greatest among them, namely idolatry. It remaineth therefore, that we come to the other part, to the end we may know, what is to be done in the outward seruice of God, that is framed according to his owne will.

Mat. That is, when worship is giuen him both agreeable to his nature, and acceptable to his Maiestie.

Theoph. What is that worship or adoration agreeable to the nature of God?

Of spirituall
worship.
John 4. 23.

Mat. It is taught of Christ himselfe, speaking to that woman of Samaria, when he saith: The houre commeth and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the father in spirit and truth: for the Father requireth euen such to worship him. Now he opposeth or setteth spirituall worship which God requireth, against carnall worship deuised by men: which, because it is answerable to their carnall and corrupt nature, maruellously pleaseth themselves, but doth most highly displease God that is a spirit. Yea indeed no worship but spirituall is acceptable vnto him.

Theoph. Now it is to be seene, wherein that adoration or spirituall worship standeth.

Mat. Sincere praier is the chiefe part of it, whether it be publike or priuate, when our hearts be lifted vp to God with a pure conscience, all things being taken away, that may withdraw or estrange our minds from him, as images, candles, and such other inuentions of men, falling downe vpon our knees, our heads vncovered, and hands lifted vp to heauen.

Theoph. Are not kneeling, vncovering of the head, and lifting the hands vp to heauen, carnall ceremonies?

Mat. No, in no wise. For we call them carnall ceremonies, that were deuised by men, and such as tie our mindes to these earthly things: but these are both ordained of
God

God, and so bring forth far diuers or vnlike effects. For they call our minds from these earthly and fraile things, & do lift them vp to true pietie, and spirituall meditation.

Theoph. Is there nothing else required to worship God spiritually, besides the things which thou hast reckoned vp?

Mat. There is somewhat else required: namely, that we doe heare his word, and receiue the Sacraments with humblenesse, and reuerence of mind, and with purity of conscience. Concerning the rest, so as wee auoid all superstitious and humane ceremonies, wee must vse the liberty which Christ by his death hath purchased for vs.

Theoph. What is that Christian libertie?

Mat. It is in euery part of it, a spirituall thing: the whole force whereof standeth in the appeasing and quieting of fearefull consciences, that God may bee so much the more earnestly glorified of vs. And indeed it consisteth of foure parts, the first two whereof (although they bee the chiefe) doe not make much for that we haue in hand: they were also handled by vs in the former booke, yea rather they be the argument of it.

Theoph. Neuerthelesse I would haue you declare them in a few words, that so I might cal to mind the things that haue beene already spoken of before.

Mat. The first is, an effect of our redemption: namely, that Christ hauing by his death redeemed vs from the sla- uery and tyranny of the diuell, hath brought vs into the most happy liberty of his kingdome. For by it we be taken for the sonnes of God, and therefore heires of his king- dome. For this cause Christ said to the Jewes, The seruant abideth not for euer in the house, but the son abideth for euer. Therefore if the sonne haue freed you, you shall bee free indeed.

The other part hangeth on the former, and it is a fruite of our regeneration, by the which when Christ hath set vs free from the seruitude of sinne, wee are restored into li- berty by his spirit, so as both we haue will, and ability from the heart to serue God. Therefore the Apostle saith: Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

Theoph. Declare the other parts of Christian liberty, ap- pertaining to the speech we haue in hand.

Of Christian
liberty.

I.

Iohn. 8. 35.

2.

2. Cor. 3. 17.

Mat. Either of them hangeth vpon our redemption? Now the first is this; that Christ by his death hauing put an end to all the ceremonies (which were nothing else but shadowes and figures) he hath deliuered vs from the bondage of them, to the end we might offer vnto him a worship meerey or altogether spirituall.

Col. 2. 16.
Heb. 10. 1.

But if we be deliuered from all those ceremonies which were commanded of God; by farre stronger reason are we set free from those, which were inuented by men which also haue in them plaine superstition.

4.
Of the vse of
meats and
other things.

The last part standeth herein, that by the death of Christ the lawfull vse of the creatures which we had lost in *Adam* through sinne, is againe restored and renewed vnto vs.

Theoph. How commeth that to passe?

Tit. 1. 15.

Mat. Men by sinne became the enemies of God, and therefore vnworthy to vse the good things of God: but being reconciled to him by the death of his son, and adopted or taken to be his sons, we may now with liberty of conscience vse al the blessings of the earth, and other creatures which he giueth vs to sustaine our life, to the end we might so much the more earnestly serue and worship him; vntill he translate vs from this life into that eternall inheritance. Hence is that of *Paul*: To the pure indeed all things are pure: but to the vncleane and vnbelceuers nothing is pure. By which things, it appeareth that Christian libertie doth by no meanes loose the bridle to our carnall desires, but standeth only in this, to bring peace to troubled consciences, whether they be out of quiet, and full of care about the forgiuenes of their sinnes, or else be troubled about the vse of the creatures, and of other indifferent things, so as they may vse them most freely, without any doubt or scruple of conscience.

Theoph. But the vse of the creatures and of indifferent things, seemeth not to auaille much to the quieting of our conscience, much lesse to the spirituall worship of God, whereunto notwithstanding you did ascribe it.

Mat. It profiteth much vnto both: and indeed first of all, except we do certainly know that wee may freely vse the creatures of God, our consciences shall neuer haue rest, yea rather they shal wauer, & be tossed to and fro with
doubting

doubting and superstition. Therefore *Paul* saith, Blessed is he that condemneth not himselfe in that which hee alloweth. that is to say, which is certainly periwaded with himselfe, what is allowed or disallowed of God

Rom. 14. 22.

Concerning the spirituall worship due vnto God, as it is defiled by a superstitious abstaining from the creatures, so by the lawfull vse of them in his feare, & without offence, it is much augmented: yea rather in this part, there is a certain testimony of the spiritual worship which we desire to giue vnto him, when as we will not submit our selues to the superstitious commandements of men. Therefore *Paul* speaking of his Christian liberty, saith: In the liberty wherewith *Christ* hath made vs free, continue, or stand you, and be not againe entangled with the yoke of bondage.

Gal. 5. 1.

Theop. What meanest thou when thou saiedst, Wee were to vse the creatures of God in his feare?

Mat. That is to say, soberly and reuerently, as it were before him.

Theoph. Why madest thou mention of offence?

Mat. Because it must specially be taken heed vnto, that by our liberty we giue no offence to the weake. For the doctrine of christian liberty, is not against the rule of charity.

Theoph. What is an offence?

Mat. The word properly signifieth something laide in the way, vpon the which he that walketh may stumble and fall. In this place by translation, or a borrowed kinde of sense, it is taken for that, by the which we are hindred from receiuing the doctrine of the truth, or else be turned from it, after we haue receiued it. In which sense he is said to offend one which either saith or doth any thing wherby the saluation of his neighbour is hindred. Now that is a most grieuous sinne. For *Christ* saith, Whosoever shall offend one of the little ones that beleue in mee, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his necke, and that he should be drowned in the bottome of the sea.

Of offences.

Mat. 18. 6.

Theoph. May there not be some certaine rule set downe, whereby it may be vndoubtedly knowen, in what things and how we are to beware, that we giue not offence to our neighbour?

Mat. There is, but that wee may rightly vnderstand it,

WC

we must know, that there be two kinds of offences. There is one called an offence taken, which falleth vpon the head of him that taketh it, forasmuch as no occasion was giuen. As for example, if any take offence because his neighbour doth somewhat that is commanded of God, or refuseth to do some euill thing, forbidden of God. For euen as our liberty must be subiect vnto charity, so charity & the righteousness of the Law, required in the second Table, ought to be subiect to the purity of faith. Therefore thou maiest not offend God, to auoid the offence of thy neighbour.

The other kind of offence, is called offence giuen, the fault and condemnation whereof, lighteth vpon him by whom it is giuen. As when one giueth offence to his neighbour, by doing something forbidden of God, or else offendeth the vnlearned and weeke, by an vncharitable and vndiscreet vsing of indifferent things.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou by indifferent things?

Mat. Those, which of themselves be neither good nor euil; such as it is knowne these be; to eat flesh or fish. Now, I said, that we must not offend the weake, through the vse of them. For the Apostle saith, Destroy thou not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

Rom. 14. 15.

1. Cor. 8. 13.

And againe, in another place; If meat offend my brother, I will eat no flesh, while the world standeth; that I may not offend my brother.

Theo. But why dost thou mention the weake onely, when thou speakest of an offence giuen in indifferent things?

Mat. Because we must abstaine from them, onely for the weakes sake, vntill they haue beene taught and confirmed in the knowledge of Christian liberty; but not for the malicious men, and mockers of Christian liberty; among whom also sometime it is profitable, that wee claime and take our liberty, that it may be knowne, what doctrine or Religion we professe.

Theoph. The third part of this commaundement is behinde: I would haue thee open that in few words.

Mat. It beginneth at these words; I am the Lord, thy God, strong, iealous, &c. Hee calleth himselfe our God, both to oppose himselfe to idols, as specially to shew, that it is hee alone, to whom wee ought to cleaue; seeing that

that he is our God, that is mercifull and good. He calleth himfelfe ftrong and iealous, to teach vs, that he both can, & will reuenge fo great an iniury, & indeed with fo grieuous vengeance, that it fhall ftretch it felfe to their children, euen to the third and fourth generation of fuch as follow the vngodlineffe of their fathers: Euen as alfo hee fheweth his perpetuall mercie and goodneffe, to many generations, vnto them which loue him and keepe his law.

Theoph. There bee three things in this thy expofition of which I thinke it fit to afke thee.

First, in what fenfe God is faid to be iealous: forasmuch as the affection of iealoufie doth not any way agree to his Maieftie.

Mat. The Lord giueth himfelfe this title, hauing refpect to the couenant made with vs. Now this he often compareth vnto mariage; as well for the vnion which wee haue with him, as for the mutuall fidelitie which wee alfo haue promifed vnto him. Hereof it cometh, that by the Prophet he faith; I will mary thee to my felfe, in faithfulneffe: as if he did fay, that as hee performed to vs all the duties of a faithfull and true husband, euen fo hee required againe by couenant, of vs, loue and chaftitie, belonging to marriage. And for this caufe he complaineth, & not feldome, by his Prophets, that Iſrael committed fornication with idols, & was polluted or defiled with adultery. When therefore he calleth himfelfe iealous, he doth it, that with one word hee may cut off al the vaine excuses, wherewith idolaters feeke to hide themfelues. For this he meaneth; that he cannot by any meanes beare it, that vnder any colour, we fhould giue the loue & reuerence, due to him, vnto idols: as an husband that religiously & holily loueth his wife, cannot endure it, whatfoeuer ſhee pretendeth, that his wife ſhould beftow the fignes of her friendship & loue vpon another. Moreover, by this title he warneth vs, that at the laſt he will execute no leſſe puniſhment vpon Idolaters, than a iealous husband vpon his wife, often taken by him in adulterie.

Theoph. The other thing commeth to my remembrance, whereof I ſaid I would afke; how it agreeth with the iuſtice of God to require the puniſhment of the fathers offence, of his poſteritie.

Why God is called iealous.

Hof. 2. 20.

Ier. 3.

Hof. 2.

Mat.

Mat. 18. 10.

Against the
Nicodemites.

Mat. The Lord meaneth not, that the children should be punished for the finnes of the parents, forasmuch as he saith by the Prophet; That he will not, that the son should beare the iniquity of the father, or the father beare the iniquity of the sonne. But this visitation is fulfilled, when the Lord taketh from the house of the vngodly his grace, the light of his truth, and the other helps of his saluation. Now then, nothing else can be looked for, but that the children, being forsaken of God, should liue most wickedly, & moue God to take vengeance vpon them. From hence is that preposterous and disordered desire of the children to follow the idolatrous way of their parents: whereupon it commeth, that they excuse their idolatrie by this one pretence, namely, the example of their fathers. But if the Lord doe threaten so great punishment to Idolaters, so much blinded, that they thinke God is rightly worshipped of them: how much more fearefull iudgement ought they to looke for, that bee illuminated with the light of his truth, and notwithstanding defile themselves with idolatrie and superstitions, against their consciences?

Theoph. Those men are wont to answer (which also my selfe haue heard from them, more then once) that they acknowledge no sin in that; seeing they lift vp their mindes vnto God, in the midst of those vngodly superstitions; which also they hate, with all their hearts.

Mat. It is a most vaine excuse, which the diuell hath put into their heads to lull their consciences asleepe, and so to hold them in his nets.

Theoph. But how can they bee conuincd of idolatrie? seeing that the outward actions of men should bee iudged of, by the inward action of the heart.

Mat. That indeede is true, in such things as of themselves be good or indifferent, and be made ill by an ill intent: as, if one praied to God, to be praised & well thought of. But concerning actions of their owne nature euill, and expressely forbidden of God, as is outward idolatrie, there is no inward affection of the minde which can make them good, and acquit them from sinne.

Theoph. In what place is outward idolatry forbidden?

Mat. In the second commandement; where, by name the

the Lord forbiddeth, that no man bow himselfe to idols, or worship them. Which thing is often repeated in sundry places of the Scripture.

Moreouer, it may be gathered of that, which the Lord answered *Elias*, when he noted, and (as it were by outward signes) marked the Israelites, which had not fallen away from his religion. For hee saith, I haue reserved to my selfe seven thousand men, which haue not bowed the knee to the image *Baal*. In which words he declareth, that all such as worshipped *Baal* with the outward gesture, were idolaters, although they might pretend the inward affection of their minde to bee otherwise. Is it not also iust and right, that God should be worshipped of vs in our bodies, as well as in our mindes, forasmuch as he is the maker of both?

Rom. 11. 4.

Theoph Againe, they do alledge for themselves, the example of *Naaman* the Syrian; who, beeing lightned with the knowledge of the true God through that miraculous cure, said vnto the Prophet; Herein the Lord be mercifull to thy seruant, when my Lord shall goe into the house of *Rimmon* to worship there, & shall leane vpon my hand, and I bow my selfe in the house of *Rimmon*: In this bowing my selfe in the house of *Rimmon*, I beseech the Lord to forgive his seruant, in this thing. To whom the Prophet answered: Goe in peace. Of which words they gather, that the Prophet gaue his consent, he should do that thing.

2. King. 5. 18

Mat. This example maketh more against them, than for them: for that *Naaman* the Syrian, the chiefe captaine of the host of the King of *Aram*, and most deare to the king himselfe, when hee was first conuerted to the religion of the true God, knew that he sinned, if hee did but onely apply himselfe (in his seruice and bowing) to the King while he worshipped: and he praieth God to forgive him that sinne. But these our *Nicodemites*, which haue so many yeeres beene taught the knowledge of God, and of his spirituall worship, and indeed farre more clearly than the Fathers vnder the Law euer were, can not bee brought thus farre, to confesse that they sinne, when euery where of their own voluntary accord, and without an inforcement of the kings authority, that vseth their seruice, they bee partakers of idolatry and superstitions. Verily, the confession

confession of *Naaman* the Syrian shall bee sufficient to condemne them in the day of iudgement: so farre off therefore it is, that by it they can by any meanes defend themselves. Concerning the answer of the Prophet, *Go in Peace*; he doth not by it allow the sinne of *Naaman*, neither was it his minde to flatter *Naaman*: But when he saw him, in so little space of time to haue profited so well in the knowledge and feare of God, as that freely he confessed and condemned his owne infirmitie; hee encouraged him, and putteth him in hope, that God would strengthen him, and bring that to perfection, which he had begun in him.

1. Re. 18. 21.

For this cause he saith, *Goe in peace*. But if he had had to doe with the *Nicodemites* of our age, hee would haue vsed a farre other manner of speech, and haue cried out aloud the same thing, which *Elias* (that went before him) did to the Iewes of his time, mingling the worship of Idols with the seruice of God; How long doe yee halt betweene two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if *Baal* be he, goe after him.

Theoph. I am not a little glad, that I haue gotten the meaning of that place. For sometimes I haue bene troubled about the loosing or vntying of that knot. I doe not therefore now thinke, that the *Nicodemites* haue any excuse, whereby to cleare themselves from the crime of idolatry: seeing it is euident, that this excuse of theirs is nothing woorth.

Mat. Adde heereunto, that there be against them the examples of *Daniel* and his fellowes, and of innumerable Martyrs, who rather chose to suffer most cruell death, than neuer so little to make shew that they worshipped idols. Forasmuch therefore as they dare not impute foole-hardnesse to these faithfull seruants of God (of whom the scripture it selfe reporteth honourably) it followeth of necessity, that they must condemne themselves; because they feare men more than God, of which fault, there is no doubt but their owne conscience accuseth them. Let them therefore thinke vpon that sentence pronounced by God against the fearefull, (that is, such as knowing the truth, doe for feare dissemble it; whom hee ioyneth with vnbelceuers,

vnbeleeuers, abominable, murtherers, whooremongers, forcerers, and liers) to whom he saith; Their part is appointed in the lake which burneth with fire & brimstone: which is the second death. Let them, I say, remember that sentence; that (if they haue any care of their saluation) they may preuent the wrath and iudgement of God, by true repentance.

Apoc. 21. 8.

Theoph. Let vs now returne to the words of the commandement. Why did he rather say, *to them that hate mee,* than, *to them which doe not obey me?*

Mat. That he might make the vngodlinesse of such as obey him not, especially of those which breake this commandement, the more manifest. For, by that their disobedience, they declare their inward hatred, which they bear towards him. But contrariwise, the godly, by keeping of his commandements, doe witnesse their loue and reuerence of him. Whereby it is apparant, how much idolaters and superstitious persons be deceiued, when they thinke to declare their loue toward God, by their phantasticall and braineficke religions; seeing God himselfe testifieth, that such deuices, be signes of the greatest hatred against him. And indeede, by these things is ouerthrowen that most false and hurtfull principle of Idolaters, wherein they affirme, that all things which bee done with a good intent (that is, with a minde to serue God) are well donne.

Of good intents.

Theoph. But yet it seemeth impossible, that good intents should be ill.

Mat. True, if thou meane such intents, as may truly be called good.

Theoph. Which are they?

Mat. Such as are grounded vpon the expresse word of God. For, the other which be against the worde of God, howsoever men esteeme them to be good, yet are they most abominable and displeasing to God. Therefore, the good intents, as they call them, of Idolaters, and superstitious persons, are no better than the intents of the Iewes, which put Christ to death; or of those, which haue slaine almost innumerable faithfull seruants of Christ, of whom euen Christ himselfe witnesseth, that they thought they did God seruice,

Ioh. 16. 2.

Theoph.

Theoph. Let vs go forward. Why doth God, speaking of punishment, mention onely three or foure generations, and, speaking of reward, nameth thousands?

Mat. To teach vs, that he is more inclining to gentlenesse, and doing of good, than to seuerity. Notwithstanding, the sentence pronounced of God is not so generall, but that still hee reserueth it in his owne liberty to shew himselfe mercifull when he pleaseth, to the children of the wicked, and to refuse and cast off such of the seed of the faithfull, whom it shall seeme good vnto him. Neuertheless, hee so tempereth it, that his promise and threatning may appeare to be neither vaine nor deceitfull.

Theoph. But these things seeme to agree rather to the whole Law, than to this commandement alone.

Ephes. 6. 2.

Mat. Right. For the Apostle witnesseth, that the first commandement is the first with promise; namely, speciall.

Theoph. Wherefore then are they put into this commandement?

Mat. Because the breach of the whole Law followeth vpon the breaking of this. For, when any man goeth about to set vp another than the true God, hee hath already broken the whole Law. For, whatsoever can be performed or done by him, cannot be esteemed obedience to God; but to the idoll which he hath made.

Adde this also, that idolaters are so busied in their superstitions, ioyned most neereely with idolatry, and doe so swell with a vaine opinion of merit, that they easily despise and set light by the lawfull keeping of Gods commandements: which, daily experience doth plentifully witness.

The third commandement.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine. For, the Lord will not holde him guiltlesse, that taketh his name in vaine.

Theoph. Wee haue beene long in the exposition of the second commandement: because the matter it selfe required it. Now we are come to the third. And first, let vs see, how many parts there be of it.

Mat. Three, as of the former.

- 1 In the first, is forbidden the rash vse of Gods name.
- 2 In the second, is commanded the sanctifying of it: and this is contained vnder a prohibition.
- 3 The third is a threatening pronounced against the breakers of this commandement.

Theo. That the exposition of this commandement may be the easier, I will demand three things.

1 First, in what sense the name of God is taken, in this place.

2 Secondly, what it is to take the name of God in vaine.

3 Thirdly, how many waies it may be taken in vaine.

Theoph. Declare, what the name of God signifieth.

Mat. It is first taken for God himselfe: as it is easie to gather out of the words of *Moses*: If thou shalt not take heede to doe all the words of this law, which are written in this booke, to feare that glorious and terrible name, *the Lord thy God*, the Lord will make thy plagues wonderfull. Secondly, it signifieth all those things, which concerne his glory: as his word and works.

Theop. But now what is it to take the name of God in vaine.

Mat. To speake of God, or his words, or works, contemptuously, lightly and rashly: this is to prophane and unhallow his Maiesty. For this cause hee saide rather, *the name of the Lord thy God*, than *my name*. For, this hee meant; that, seeing the Lord is our God, we ought to thinke so reuerently of his maiesty, that of vs it should bee had in most reuerent and inuolable estimation.

Theoph. Now are we to see, how many waies the name of God is taken in vaine: which is the third point of the first part of this commandement.

Mat. It may indeede bee taken in vaine, sundry waies: which notwithstanding I will reduce vnto fve.

1 The first, which is also the most grieuous, is blasphemie, that is, railing, namely, when a man doth not onely speake contemptuously of God, but doth also vse reprochfull words, and such as sauer of contempt against his Maiestie, as they do, that renounce God. To whom also, we doe ioyn all those, that trample vnder their feete the

H

most

The first part of the third commandement is of Gods name. *Dent. 28. 58*

How the name of God is taken in vaine.

How many waies it is taken in vaine.

most holy mystery of our saluation wrought by Christ, & doe vsually sweare by his death, bloud, body, and other parts thereof: as, his head and belly; and that, for the most part, of set purpose, and for the nonce; not being stirred or occasioned thereto, by anger: albeit, indeed, there be no anger, that before God can excuse so horrible blasphemy.

Theoph. Such men verily bee farre off from giuing those thanks which we owe vnto him, in that hee vouchsafed to take vpon him our humane nature; and that, in it (to deliuer vs from euerlasting death) hee would be abased to the most shamefull death of the crosse.

1. Cor. 2. 8.

Mat. Thou saist true. And therein they shew themselves worse than the very Iewes, of whom he was crucified. For, if they had knowen him, they would not haue crucified the Lord of glory, saith *Paul*. Therefore, except they repent, it must needs come to passe, that (to their eternall misery) they shall seele his most iust wrath and iudgement, seeing that, of set purpose they do so prophane the benefit of our redemption wrought by him.

Theoph. Let vs search out another way, wherby the name of God is taken in vaine.

The prophaning of Gods word.

Mat. When we abuse the holy Scripture: which is done chiefly three waies.

1 First, when it is prophaned by ridiculous scoffes and mocks, as the maner of drunkards and prophane men is.

2 Secondly, when it is corrupted; that is, wrested otherwise than the true sense is: as heretikes doe.

3 Thirdly, when any abuseth it to enchantments or sorceries, for the healing of men or beasts, and such like.

Theoph. But they which by that meanes heale diseases, (especially those of men) do say, there is no sinne in it: seeing they vse good words, whereof there followeth a very good effect; namely, good health for the most part restored to the sicke.

2. Cor. 11. 14

Mat. The diuell vseth to assaile men, disguised: that is to say, he changeth himselfe into an Angell of light; to the end he may be the better welcome. For he knoweth, that if he were descried, all would abhorre him. Therefore he can finde no better colour, than if he make shew of the worde of God: which neuertheles, is both corrupted by him, and wrested

wrested from the true meaning; as hee doth with hereticks: or else it is turned from the right and lawfull vse (namely, doctrine, reproofe, correction, and instruction) to the healing of bodies, and such other delusions, wherby both it is prophaned, and the name of God taken in vaine. Whereupon it is plaine, that the cures, which sometimes ensue vpon those deceits and iuglings, bee not of God (against whome there is that way great sin committed); but from the Diuell.

Theoph. Canst thou prooue, that those kinds of healings of cure, be of the Diuell?

Mat. Yea indeed, and that most easily. For God vseth onely two waies to the curing of diseases: whereof one is naturall & ordinary; namely, by the helpe of medicines, whereinto he hath put that vertue and force: the other is besides the course of nature, by miracle; which is when God himselfe doth it, by his owne power. But, that way of healing, by rehearsing words out of the holy Scriptures, cannot be called ordinary or naturall; forasmuch as the word of God is not giuen to heale bodies, but soules. Neither can it be reckned among the miracles, which proceed from the power of God. For, the power of God is not tied to the vitering of certain words, be they neuer so good or excellent, otherwise there were no man, that might not do miracles at his pleasure; which, in very deed, is most absurd. For thereupon it should follow, that God declareth his power, not according to his owne will, but according to our pleasure. Therefore no man ought to doubt, but that these kinds of healings be of the diuell, and not of God.

Theoph. They obiekt, that it is not likely, that the diuell (the enemy of mankind) should regard and care for the good health of men.

Mat. That which treachers and poysoners are wont to doe (namely, to flatter thee for a time, to the end they may afterward lay hands vpon thee the more easily) the same vseth the diuell. For, if he heale the diseases of cattell, hee doth it with no other minde, but to binde the owners of them to himselfe. If he bring any ease to our bodies, hee doth it to bring the soule in bondage to himself, and (consequently) that, at length he may throw downe body and

soule into hell, where he is. Finally he doth alwaies vsurp dominion and Lordship ouer them, to whom hee maketh shew of seruice for a time.

Theoph. It were therefore better for a man to serue himselfe, than to haue such a seruant.

Mat. It were so; and indeed, to be holden with sicknes all the time of our life, rather than to recouer our health by his helpe.

Theoph. I will yet demand oue thing. Whence hath the Diuell this power, that hee can heale the diseases of our body?

Mat. God permitteth it vnto him by his iust iudgement, as it hath beene already saide; that they might more and more be blinded, which flie to the diuell: that so by their owne desert, they may perish in their errors.

Theoph. The third maner of taking Gods name in vaine is behind.

Gods name
taken in vain
by dissolute-
nes of life.

Psal. 50.16.

Mat. It is, when a man professeth himselfe to know God; but denieth him in his deeds: that is, whose whole life yeeldeth nothing but offences, and stumbling blockes. Of such the Prophet maketh mention: for thus the Lord chideth with them; Why dost thou declare my statutes, and takest my Law in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest to bee reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee. The same also is to be thought of hypocrites; which are farre worse than these. For, in words, and outward deeds, they doe vainely make shew of the feare of God: but their heart is very far off from him. In this number also they may be reputed, whose mind wandreth about other matters, while they are praying.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fourth manner of taking Gods name in vaine.

When we
speake of
God without
consideration

Mat. When this word God, or the name of *Iesus*, is vsed of vs either rashly, or without cause, as many doe: with whom it is ordinary, that, in the way of maruelling or wondring, they often vse these speeches, *my God! Iesus!*

Theoph. But thou shalt hardly perswade these, that they take the name of God in vaine; although it be often vsed of them. For they say; It is better to name God than the Diuell.

Mat.

Mat. Our nature is so corrupt, and so vsed to sinne, that wee see not any but the greatest: which, indeed if they bee weighed by our iudgement, shall bee taken for very small. For this cause, God gaue vnto vs his Law: which is as it were a glasse, and a most perfect paterne of holinesse; that, by comparing our actions with it, we might acknowledge our sinnes, and studie to amend. But, of these things shall be spoken more at large, when we come to the vse of the Law.

Now we are to examine that fourth maner of breaking this law, by comparing it with the commandement it self; *Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vaine.*

What is this, *in vaine*? Doe wee then only sinne against Gods name, when we assaile and set vpon it with blasphemies and renouncing of it? No, at no hand. but euen then also, when it is named either contemptuously or rashly. But who is he, that (being in his right mind) seeth not, that it is both contemptuously and rashly vsed in these formes of speech? If one haue been at a feast (which peradventure hath not beene without riot and other sinnes) hee will not feare to vter these words, according to the custome among vs; O my God, how excesssiuely haue wee laughed! O my God, how richly and daintily were we entertained!

If any of our seruants disquiet vs, by their vnskilfulnesse or slownesse, straightway he shall heare,

O God, how foolish thou art!

O God, how slow thou art!

If wee finde any place filthy and vncleane, or if we smell any ill sauer, by and by shall the name of God be mingled with these things, in these words;

O God, what a filthy place!

O God, what an ill sauer doe I smell!

These examples, most common among our countrymen, were to be remembred; that we might so much the more plainly shew, how common a thing it is with vs, to vse the name of God contemptuously, and vnaduisedly. A certain ancient left it written, that if we haue a costly garment, we doe then only put it on, when we go to the company of great personages, and doe most carefully looke into it that it be not spotted: Insomuch that we shun and

auoid all such things as might soile it. But, the most holy name of God (with the excellency and worthinesse whereof no garment, no nor any creature is indeed to be compared) is so little esteemed of vs, that it is continually mixed with vaine and idle speeches, railings, and filthinesse.

Theoph. I doe acknowledge, that the name of God is abused with very great contempt, in the speeches which thou hast reckoned vp: but, that sin is so common, that in very deede the godly themselves, and such as desire to reforme their liues, be not free from it. For, a man shall finde very few that sinne not in this point.

Mat. The cause why I haue handled that sinne the more largely, was, that it may the better be knowen: especially to such as be touched with any feare of God; that by the reuerence, wherewith they honour his name, they may be mooued to amendment: Which they shall with very small labour attaine, if they giue their mindes vnto it.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fifth and last way, whereby the name of God is taken in vaine.

Mat. That is, when a man sweareth vainly.

Theoph. Before I demand how any sweareth by the name of God vainly, I wold haue thee to declare what an oth is,

Mat. It is the calling of God to witnesse, for the confirmation of the vnknown truth of our speech.

Theoph. How many kindes of oaths be there?

Mat. Two. For, the one is of things past, the other of things to come; namely when any thing is promised with an oath: which promise, if it be made vnto God, is called a vow.

Theoph. Let vs consider how a man sweareth by the name of God, in vaine.

Mat. That is, as often as those circumstances, which are required in an oath, are not kept.

Theoph. How many are those circumstances?

Mat. In an oath concerning things past, there are but three; without which, the oath shall be altogether vaine.

1. The first is, that the thing, which wee are ready to sweare, be not onely true; but also that the truth of it bee certainly knowen to vs.

2. Secondly, that it be of some importance, either in respect

Of a vaine
oath.
Of an oath.

respect of Gods glory, or the good of our neighbour.

3. The third is, that the truth of that thing, by no other meanes can be brought to light: for, otherwise, the name of God is contemptuously vsed.

But, as an oath respecteth things to come, there be five things to be obserued.

1. First, that the thing be of some importance.

2. That it be iust and lawfull.

3. That it be in our power.

4. That we be ready to performe it.

5. Finally, that when time is, wee performe it indeed; although it should be to our losse: as wee be taught of the Prophet.

Psal. 118.4.

Theo. What if all these circumstances be not obserued, is not the name of God taken in vaine?

Mat. It is: and heerein he is greatly reproched; especially, if that whereof we sweare be not true. For then hee, that so sweareth, doth put a lie and an vntruth vpon God; and consequently (so much as in him lieth) doth take from him his Godhead, and maketh him like the Diuell, who is the father of lies.

Iohn. 8.44.

Theo. But if we haue taken our oath to do some ill thing (as for example, to kill) are we bound to performe that?

Mat. At no hand. For, in our Baptisme, wee vowed vnto God, that we would serue him, and obey his will. And that oath cutteth off all other contrary to it.

Sinne therefore is committed in that an vnlawfull oath was taken vainely and rashly, and contrary to the will of God; howbeit, it were far more hainous to keepe this oath. But if we be not bound to doe ill things, albeit wee haue expressly promised them; much lesse if they bee required of vs, vnder the colour of some generall promise. For secretly they be excepted which are not lawfull; no lesse than those which be impossible, or cannot be done. And therefore Herod was not bound to cut off the head of *Iohn Baptist*, by his oath taken to *Herodias*.

Mat. 11.7.

The second part of the third commandment of sanctifying Gods name.

Theo. We haue spoken sufficiently of the first part of this commandment: let vs come to the other. Now, that pertaineth to the sanctifying of Gods name. By what means therefore may the name of God be sanctified or hallowed of vs?

Mat. By five; euen the same number with those, whereby it is taken in vaine.

Theoph. Declare seuerally euery of these.

Mat. The first is, that we sing his praises, read his word, and speake reuerently of him.

Iob. 1. 21.

2. The other is, that in aduersitie hee be praised of vs, both in heart and mouth: as we read *Iob* did, in these words *Let the name of God be blessed.*

3. The third is, that so often as need shall require, we doe make a most franke confession of his truth; and leade a life agreeable to that confession.

4. The fourth is, that we pray vnto him, and from our heart giue him thanks.

5. The fift, that, when it shall be necessary, wee sweare by his name.

Theoph. How is the name of God sanctified, when wee sweare by it?

Mat. Because, by an oath lawfully taken, he is acknowledged of vs for the true God: forasmuch as wee confesse him to bee the searcher of the heart and secret thoughts, when we cal him to be a witnesse of the things that be hidden from men.

Secondly, because we flie to him as a most earnest defender of truth; and therefore a most seuerer reuenger of lyers, and such as forswear themselves. And these indeed be the proper offices of God alone.

Heb. 6. 16.

Finally, by an oath his name is sanctified: seeing that, by it, controuersies, which hurt Christian charity, bee ended, as the Apostle speaketh.

Against Anabaptists, that wholly condemne swearing.

From whence wee may gather, how woonderfull the kindnesse of God is toward vs: who doth so farre abase himselfe, that he will be present at our controuersies, and make an end of them. Therefore there is no cause why wee should doubt to sweare by his name, in the place of iudgement, or elsewhere; so as all the conditions be kept. For whosoever refuseth to sweare, refuseth to giue glorie vnto God.

Mat. 5. 34.

Theoph. But Christ commandeth that we sweare not at all, neither by the heauen, nor by the earth; and that our communication be yea, yea, nay, nay: affirming further that

that whatsoever is more, is of euill, which also is confirmed by Saint James. *Iam. 5. 12.*

Mat. That indeed is true. But Christ in the same Chapter, plainly saith; That he came not to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but to fulfill them. Therefore his purpose is not to condemne the right vse of an oath, expressly commanded of God in these words of Moses; Thou shalt feare the Lord thy God, and shall serue him onely, and sweare by his name. *Deut. 6. 13.*

Theoph. With what minde therefore, did Christ vtterly forbid swearing?

Mat. With a purpose to restore, to this commandement the true vnderstanding of it; which had bene much corrupted by the false glosses of the Scribes and Pharisees. For they taught it was no sinne, when any sware in vaine by the creatures (as by heauen and earth); seeing that the name of God was not expressed. But Christ meaneth to shew that although the name of God was suppressed, or not mentioned, yet secretly it was sufficiently expressed in such oaths, and that therefore therein sinne was committed against this commandement. Therefore his purpose is not to forbid the lawfull vse of an oath, but the abuses: as when a man sweareth vainely, by what name or in what manner soeuer it be done.

Theoph. It followeth therefore, that it is lawfull to swear by creatures; so as it be not vainly: forasmuch as the name of God is secretly vnderstood in them.

Mat. Yea verily: yet with this condition, that those creatures be auoided in swearing, which haue bene commonly abused to idolatry. For then the name of God is not vnderstood vnder them, but it is euen suppressed that they may haue his roome, the honour being giuen vnto them, which belongeth to the maiesty of God alone. But this doe they, which sweare by the names of saints departed. In which respect the Lord is bitterly angry with them that sweare by other gods, and taketh that kind of swearing to be an argument of manifest falling away from him. Whereupon he complaineth of the Israelites in *Jeremy*, in these words: Thy children haue forsaken mee, and sworne by those which are not gods. And that indeede very iustly: *Jer. 5. 7.*

Thus this learned man and some other haue thought of this matter.

for

for the breaking of the second and third commandment, is a signe of breaking the first.

Theo. How so?

Mat. Euen as he worshippeth God with spirituall worship, and sweareth by his name so oft as the Lord shall require, which spiritually hath conceiued and comprehended him in his minde: so whosoever hath imagined to himselfe a false God, or many gods, doth forthwith shew it by worshipping of idols, whose names hee hath in his mouth, when he sweareth. It is therefore truely said, that idols be first in the heart, before they be brought forth either with the hand or mouth.

Theoph. Let vs come to the third part of the commandment, which is the threatning against such as breake it.

The third
part of the
third com-
mandment.

Mat. It is contained in these words; The Lord will not hold him guiltlesse which taketh his name in vaine. Whereby it appeareth, that the transgression of this commandment is accounted a most hainous sinne before God, notwithstanding men make light of it, and that therefore hee will with grievous punishment, be auenged vpon such as be guilty of it.

Theoph. Is there any thing that doth so much aggrauate this sinne?

Mat. Yea verily. For there is no commandment, in the breaking wherof there is seene such insolent contempt of God.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because wee are ledde to breake the other commandments, either vpon a false opinion of worshipping God, as when we giue our selues to idolatry and superstition; or for our owne estimation, when we yeeld our selues to reuenge; or for our pleasure, when wee commit fornication; or for our profit, when wee steale; or for some feare, as when wee tell a lie: but for the breaking of this commandment, we can pretend neither the worshipping of God, nor our profit, nor our pleasure, neither any feare. Therefore the transgression of this commandment, and especially blasphemy, hath no other beginning, but a most manifest contempt of Gods maiestie.

Theoph. Some are wont to excuse the matter by custome
to

to cleere themselves of the sinne of the contempt of God.

Mat. But I would demand, whence that custome sprung: Did it not come from the very impiety and mad contempt of God, wherewith our mindes were wholly taken vp and possessed before? For it is certaine, when at the first the minde of man is lightned with the least Sun-beame of the feare of God, that, that bad custome is presently changed, howsoeuer it might goe about to defend it selfe by prescription of very long time.

The fourth commandement.

Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy; six daies shalt thou labour, and doe all thy worke, but the seuenth day shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt doe no maner of worke, thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, thy man-seruant, nor thy maid-seruant, nor thy cattell, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; for in six daies the Lord made the heauen and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seuenth day, wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

Theoph. The fourth commandement of this first Table is behinde: to the exposition whereof, that we may make an easier way, let vs see of how many parts it standeth.

Mat. Of foure.

1. The first containeth the summe of the whole commandement in these words; Remember the Sabbath day, to keepe it holy.

2. The second sheweth, which that Sabbath day is, when he saith: Six daies shalt thou labour, and doe all thy worke: but vpon the seuenth day, shall be the Sabbath to the Lord thy God.

3. The third teacheth, how that day is to be kept holy. Thou shalt do no worke, neither thou, nor thy sonne, nor thy daughter, nor thy man-seruant, nor thy maid seruant, nor thy cattell, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates.

4. The fourth rendreth a reason, why hee appointed the seuenth day, rather than any other day, vnto this rest: For in six daies God made the heauen and the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seuenth day, therefore he blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

Theoph.

Theoph. We must follow these foure parts in order. Declare therefore the meaning of the first.

Mat. When the Lord saith ; Remember the Sabbath day, hee teacheth vs that this commandement is of very great-waight. Which appeareth to be most true, euen by this, that the keeping of the rest of the commandements, dependeth vpon the keeping of this. In respect whereof, the Lord euery where by his Prophets, obiection to the Israelites the transgression of this commandement, when he meaneth to signifie the breach of the whole Law. Hee addeth after ; that thou sanctifie or hallow it : that is, cease and abstaine from bodily workes, that thou maiest apply thy selfe earnestly to spirituall and heavenly.

Theoph. Which callest thou heavenly & spirituall works ?

Why the
Lord, vnder
the law, com-
manded the
Sabbath,

Mat. That we may vnderstand that point, we must know that the Sabbath was commanded of God for two causes, the first whereof was ceremoniall. That ceremonie also is considered in two respects. For by that bodily rest, the Lord meant to warne the people of Israel, to abstaine and rest from their owne works being carnall and defiled, that they might suffer the holy Ghost to worke in them. This doth he himselfe witnesse in these words : See that you keepe my Sabbath, because it is a signe betweene mee and you, in your generations, that you may know, that it is I the Lord which sanctifie you. Out of which words it is plaine, that that ceremonie was a type or shadow of our regeneration.

Secondly, that ceremony serued, to signifie the euerlasting rest of the kingdome of heauen, which was as it were a part of the former. For that cause the Lord calleth the land of Canaan, rest, because it was a signe or token of eternall life, according to the interpretation of the Apostle to the Hebrewes.

The other end of the bodily rest, is this, that wee may wait vpon the ministerie of the Church : for that is established by God in this commandement. Moreover, that we may meditate vpon his works, & diligently apply our selues to the loue of our neighbour, and the instruction of our household and familie. These are the two ends of this bodily rest : the first whereof together with the rest of the ceremonies,

ceremonies, is taken away by the comming of Christ, who is the trueth of it. But the other is perpetuall, and to continue for euer. Therefore that rest belongeth vnto vs, and is euery weeke to be kept one day.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part.

Mat. After that the Lord had commanded one day for rest, then he sheweth which day he will haue kept, and that is the seuenth, namely the last of the weeke. He doth also teach, how we should spend the rest of the weeke, namely in working, that is, in doing our worldly businesses to the end we may be the fitter for the rest of the seuenth day, and may the better performe such things as hee himselfe hath commanded.

Theoph. Which was the seuenth day?

Mat. That which we do yet cal Saturday. For the Lords day properly, is the first day of the weeke, according to the distinction made by God himselfe. But the seuenth day the Apostles changed, to teach that the ceremony was abrogated, and the Rest they put off to the Lords day, vpon the which Christ by his resurrection had put an end to that ceremony.

Theoph. How did Christ by his resurrection, put an end vnto that ceremony?

Mat. Because, by the vertue and power thereof, wee are spiritually raised vp, that we may serue God, and mortifie our concupiscences all the daies of our life: so as, for this purpose, we do not now stand in need of the obseruations of any day.

Theoph. Is not this to obserue daies, which thou condemnedst as a superstitious thing, in the exposition of the former commandements?

Mat. To obserue daies and times, is nothing else, but to thinke one day or time holier than another, which agreeth not to the hallowing of the Lords day. For we do not attribute vnto it greater holinesse than to another. But when the Apostles would take away the ceremonie of the seuenth day, they appointed this, which came first in place, to that vse: and as another day had beene as fit, so neither is this lesse fit or conuenient, than any other.

Theoph. Declare the third part of the commandement.

Mat.

Mat. It teacheth that no worke concerning this life is to be done, vnlesse it be necessary, vpon that day. But it is to be marked, that such workes were then iudged to be faulty & sinfull among the Iewes, becauie they were contrarie to the ceremonie which they were bound to keepe. But now, that ceremony being taken away, they are not forbidden as euill in themselues, but because they hinder vs, and withdraw vs from holy exercises and meditations.

The. But why is there mention made of the *Rest* of men-seruants, & of maid-seruants, of cattell, and of strangers?

Mat. Concerning men-seruants, and maid-seruants, God commandeth this, as well that they might haue some ease from labour, as also that they might attend vpon the ministry of the Church, and so to care for and looke to their owne saluation, no lesse then their maisters. The *Rest* of beasts God doth therefore mention, because they work not but with the seruice & helpe of seruants. Hee speaketh also of strangers, because if they be of the same profession with vs, they also are bound to keepe the law of God: if not, yet at least, heede must be taken that they be not an euill example to the rest.

Theoph. The fourth part is remaining.

Mat. The Lord setteth before vs his owne example, the more earnestly to pricke vs forward to the keeping of that *Rest*. He doth also call to our remembrance the creation of the world, that wee might remember of whom wee haue our beginning, & the innumerable benefits that we enioy. The Sabbath day therefore should bee vnto vs as it were an image of the creation of the world: and vpon that day ought wee to meditate and thinke vpon that creation, lest we be guilty of that fault, which God in former times by *Moses* vpbraided the Iewes with; Thou hast forgotten that strong God which hath begotten thee, the God which made thee thou hast not remembered.

Hereupon it is, that by name hee reckoneth vp euery of his workes by it selfe: For in fixe daies the Lord made the heauen, and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them. But here is mention of the Lords resting, not because hee hath cast off the care of his workes: for hee continually worketh to preserue his creatures, and to guide them by his providence,

dence. But this hee would teach vs, that hee hath ceased from making of the kinds of things. Finally, the blessing and hallowing of the Sabbath day is after added, not because that day is in it selfe holier than others; but for that it is of God appointed for this purpose, that we should rest from our own works, and diligently giue our selues to holy works.

Theoph. The Sabbath day therefore is sanctified of God, in that he did appoint it to holy and religious works; It is also sanctified of vs, when wee giue our selues carefully to performe those works.

Mat. It is true.

Th. But are not the rest of the daies so hallowed of God, namely, that they be appointed to holy & religious works?

Mat. Yes verily, so farre forth indeed as may bee for our busineses. But vpon the Sabbath all other things are to bee set aside, that wee may diligently apply our selues to those works. And verily men bee without excuse, except they doe this. For whereas the Lord hath diuided the weeke into seuen daies, hee appointed one onely for himselfe, but the other six he hath left vnto vs, to looke to our owne matters.

The second Table of the Law.

Theoph. The foure commandements of the first Table being expounded, order requireth that wee come to the six last. But before we goe to the exposition of each by it selfe, I desire you to make a generall and brieve exposition of them, which may shew how they agree together, as you did when you handled the first Table.

Mat. As in the first Table the Lord doth teach true religion, that is, the way whereby wee may truely worship him: So in the last hee prescribeth a holie policie or gouernement vnto men, that they may keepe peace among themselues, and serue God with one minde. But for the vpholding of that policie, it is necessary that some be superiors, and other some inferiors, and that the superiours be armed with some authority, wherewith they may keepe the subiects within the bounds of their dutie, and provide that the mightier doe no wrong to men of
meane

The summe
of the last
Table

meane qualitie. Now all these things doth the Lord ordaine in the fifth commaundement. For by little and little he doth in continuance of time bring vs to all lawfull subiection, beginning with that which is most easie to be borne. Having settled and appointed Magistrates, hee doth presently adioyne lawes, by which they ought to gouerne their subiects peaceably, and keepe them in equitie and iustice: From whence also euery one should seeke the rule of loue, that they may liue with their neighbours, according to the will of God.

And first, because nothing is more necessary for the safegard of humane societie, than that the life of man bee preterued, in the sixt commaundement the Lord forbiddeth murther, and also commaundeth that euery one preserue the life of his neighbour, no otherwise than their owne. When he hath taken order for the safegard of mens liues, because men are mortall, in the seuenth commaundement, forbidding whooredome, he inioyneth marriage to all men that haue not the gift of continency, to the end mankind may be preserued and encreased. And because a family or household followeth marriage: to the sustaining whereof, riches are required, in the eight commaundement he appointeth to euery one propriety of goods, while he forbiddeth theft, wherewith quiet possession is disturbed and troubled; and doth also command, that we labour to get riches, both for our owne vse, and to giue to the poore. Afterward, because it cannot be (such is the desire and couetousnesse of men) that goods can bee enioyed of vs, but that oftentimes there arise strifes and controuersies, which the Magistrates cannot appease, except they plainly know the truth of the matter, in the ninth commaundement the Lord forbiddeth false witnesse bearing, which is no small hinderance to the ending of controuersies, & doth command that we speake the truth, both before the Magistrate and elsewhere in all kind of matters. Finally, because the Law-giuer is spirituall, he would teach vs that his law also is spirituall: that is, that it requireth not onely outward obedience, as the lawes made by men doe, but euen the inward affection of the heart. Therefore vnder the name of concupiscence, which he forbiddeth in the last commaundement,

dement, he requireth also this, that we obey him with all our heart, so as there be not any thing in vs, be it neuer so little, that is contrary to his will.

The fift commandement of the Law.

Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy daies may be long in the land, which the Lord thy God giueth thee.

Theoph. Let vs goe to the particular exposition of each commandement of the last Table. And let vs begin at the fift, which is the first. These be the words of it; Honor thy father & thy mother, &c Of how many parts standeth it?

Mat. Of two, the first is a precept, namely that we honour father and mother: the other is a promise made to the keepers of this commandement, which is, that they shall liue long: wherein secretly is contained a threatning against such as breake it.

Theoph. That wee may clearely vnderstand the former part, two questions are to be determined of vs. First, whom God comprehendeth vnder the name of parents. And secondly, what is to be vnderstood by the name of Honour. Answer therefore to this question.

Mat. Vnder the name of parents they all bee comprehended, who by any meanes in respect of their office are bound to do the dutie of parents towards vs, namely they that ought to haue care for our instruction, health, life, preservation of our goods, credit and peace. For in these things is contained the dutie of parents toward their children. Therefore vnder the name of parents, are to be vnderstood, first

- 1 Gardians and tutors, that be to vs in stead of parents.
2. Magistrates, who also be called fathers of the Countrey.
3. Ministers of the church, and Schoole-Masters, which be our spirituall parents.
4. Husbands towards their wiues.
5. Masters towards their seruants.

Theoph. Wherefore did God comprehend all these aboue mentioned, vnder the name of parents?

Mat. Because, such is the naughtinesse and pride of mans nature, (for it is swollen with the desire of greatnesse

Who be comprehended vnder the name of parents.

and dignity) that it hardly endureth to bee subiect vnto any. For this cause, that superioritie, which by nature is most amiable, and least enuied, is propounded for an example, that our high minds might the more easily bow, and be made acquainted with subiection.

What the
word Honour
signifieth.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other question. Wherin consisteth the honor which we are commanded to giue to our parents?

Mat. It consisteth in three things.

1. First, in outward salutation, proceeding from the inward reuerence which wee ought to yeeld vnto them; which shal be done, if we acknowledge them to be the ministers of God for our good.

2. Secondly, in obedience, which we yeeld to their commandements; so as they be not contrary to the will of God: for then, by the rule of *Peter*, we ought to obey God rather than men.

Acts 5.29.

3. Thirdly, that, in their pouerty we releue the with our wealth. And therewithal it is to be obserued, that God doth not onely prescribe a rule to inferiors, whereby they may giue due honor to their superiors, but doth also teach superiors their duty which they ought to doe to their inferiors.

Theoph. What if the superiors faile in their duty, are not the inferiors discharged from the honour due to them?

Mat. No not so: for our finnes are not excused by the finnes of others. Moreouer, the obedience wee giue them is directly referred to God, of whom it is commanded, and not properly to themselves.

Theoph. Wee haue staied long enough vpon the former part of this commandement: let vs therefore come to the other: and that is a promise, the words whereof be these; *That thou maiest liue long in the land which the Lord thy God giueth thee.* To the explaining whereof there be fise things, whereof I will aske thee.

1. First, why the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement rather than to the rest of the commandements of this latter table?

2. Why he promised long life, rather than any thing els?

3. Whether we receiue benefit by long life, which is subiect to so many troubles?

∴ What

4. What that land is, wherof mention is made in this place.

5. How is this promise fulfilled? seeing it is certaine, that sometimes obedient children bee taken away by vntimely death, and the stubborn and disobedient liue long. Now therefore answer to the first. What is the cause that the Lord ioyned a promise to this commandement?

Mat. He teacheth superiours, by his owne example, how they ought to behaue themselves toward their inferiours: namely, to allure them to obedience rather by gentlenesse and promises, than by seueritie and punishments.

Th. Goe forward, and in like sort answer to the second: why is long life promised by God, rather than any thing els?

Mat. The promise is very fitly applied to the commandement it selfe; for it teacheth good and obedient children that if they honor the instruments or meane, of this their life (namely their parents) they shall long enioy it. But on the contrary side, it threatneth death to the disobedient; because they be altogether vnworthy to haue the vse of that benefit, the instruments or means whereof they honor not.

Theo. The third point followeth. What are we the better for long life, seeing it is subiect to so many afflictions?

Mat. I grant indeed that this corporall life, if it be separated from the fauour of God, is most miserable and vnhappy: But it is a blessing to the faithfull. For, continuing in it, we serue to his glory: and sometimes he granteth vs this, that with great peace and quietnesse we enioy sundry temporall benefits. Moreouer, this promise is applied to the common opinion of men. For they account long life for a great blessing.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fourth point. What is that land, wherof the Lord maketh mention in this place?

Mat. In respect of the Israelites, it is to be vnderstood of the land of Canaan; which they had receiued of the Lord, to possesse it; but in respect of vs, it is extended a great deale further. For, whersoever we be in the world, we haue right of dwelling there, from the Lord, whose the earth is.

Theoph. The last point is behind. How this promise is fulfilled? seeing it is certaine, that oftentimes obedient & good children die young, and the disobedient liue long.

Mat. That is proued by the examples of *Absalon*, *Core*, *Dathan*, *Abiron*, and of the sonnes of *Hely*. Daily experience also confirmeth it, of stubborne and disobedient children: for they be for the most part seene, either in prisons, or vpon the gallowes. Contrariwise, the good and obedient, for the most part, haue long life, with great quietnesse and peace. But, if at any time it fall out otherwise, we must remember, that al the promises of God concerning earthly things, be with condition, namely, so far forth, as he shall know them to be expedient, both for his owne glory, and for our saluation. When therefore God doth betimes call his out of this life vnto himselfe, he prouideth farre better for them than if he gaue them long life. For, hee taketh them from the miseries of this world, & putteth them into the possession of eternall life. On the other side, sometimes hee giueth the wicked long life; but so weake and full of misery, that it is more grievous than death it selfe. For this cause, *Moses*, repeating the law of God declareth that promise, in these words: *That it may be well with thee in the land which, &c.* But, if it fall out otherwise, it is for the cause which was at large set forth by vs, when we entreated of afflictions. For in that place wee taught, wherefore the Lord will haue the wicked sometimes to liue long and happily in this world, and the godly to suffer all kind of afflictions. Notwithstanding, that saying of *Salomon* abideth true; *Although the sinner commit euill an hundred times, and God prolongeth his daies, yet I know that it shall be well with them that feare the Lord.*

Deu. 6. 2.

Eccl. 8. 12.

The sixth commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

Theo. Hauing finished the treatise of the fift commaundement, we are to come to the sixt. How many parts bee there of it?

Mat. Two.

1 First, the forbidding of murther.

2 The commanding of keeping peace and friendship with our neighbours.

Theop. How large is the word killing?

Mat. It containeth all the degrees and steppes by the which

The exposition of the first part.

which we come to it: yea, indeed, all those things, whereby we are brought and stirred to commit murther, according to the third rule.

Theoph. Rehearse those steps or degrees.

Mat. They be three. The first whereof is hatred conceived in the heart: forasmuch as it is in plaine words forbidden of *Moses*; *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart.*

Leu. 19. 17.

Theoph. What if our enemy be a wicked man, is it not lawfull to hate him?

Mat. We may indeed hate his sins; but not his person. But we must diligently beware of two extremities, wherein we doe sinne on either side.

The first is, that we hate not the person, for his sinne.

The other, that wee loue not the sinne, for the persons sake.

Theoph. Let vs come to the second degree, by the which we come to murther.

Mat. It is anger: for it is a declaration of the hatred lying hid in the heart.

Theoph. Doe you thinke it altogether vnlawfull to bee angry with any?

Mat. I doe not thinke so. For, anger is a naturall affection: wherein if moderation be kept, it deserueth as much praise, as the two extremities deserue dispraise.

Theoph. What is that moderation?

Mat. When with zeale for the glory of God, or with iust sorrow, wee be angry, because iniurie is done vnto vs without our desert, and that, keeping a mean; and with this caution, that we neither speake nor doe any thing, that is against the honor of God, christian modesty, and the loue of our neighbour. In which sense *Paul* commandeth; *Bee angry, and sinne not.*

Eph. 4. 26.

Theoph. Let vs consider of the two extremities of anger: and first let vs speake of that which sinneth, in exceeding.

Mat. We doe then fall into it, when we be angry rashly, that is, without a lawfull cause: or else when, being moued for a iust cause, we do passe the bounds of moderation, of speaking or doing the things that be against the honour of God, neighbourly charity, and christian modestie. But that falleth out, when wee be so possessed with that affecti-

Iam. 1. 20.

on, that the iudgement is troubled, and reason it selfe is darkened, for then for a time, wee are like vnto mad men that know not what they do. For this cause *Iames* saith; The wrath of man performeth not the righteousnesse of God.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other extremitie. How doe we sinne in the defect or want of anger?

Mat. When, perceiuing that God is offended, or our credit hurt without cause, wee are notwithstanding not moued, as our dutie requireth: which would haue vs not to suffer euils; but that according to our callings we should set our selues against them. Hence it was that *Moses* was so angry in the wildernesse with the Israelites, whom he saw worshipping the golden Calfe with idolatrous worship; *John Baptist* with the Scribes and Pharises, and *Iacob* with his father in law, *Laban*. *Moses* indeed, being moued with most iust anger, drew out the sword, because he was a magistrate. *John* vsed most sharpe and vehement reprehensions, because hee was a minister of Gods word, and had to doe with Hypocrites, and men hardened in their sinnes. *Iacob* dealeth with moderate and gentle admonitions, because he was a priuate person, and his owne matter was in question.

Theoph. The third step, by the which men come to murder, is behinde.

Leuit. 7. 26.

Mat. It is euery hurt offered to the person of our neighbour: wherupon also sometimes ensueth murder it selfe, which fault is indeed most grievous in the sight of God. As appeareth by that which the Lord saith, that he abhorreth the man slaier; and by the penaltie, appointed by himselfe, vnto men-killers. For he ordained, that not only men, but also the very brute beasts that had slaine man, should bee put to death. For which cause he forbad his people the eating of bloud. For, by that ceremonie, he would shew, how much he abhorred the shedding of bloud, and consequently murder.

Theoph. Is there any speciall cause, which maketh murder to be esteemed so hainous a sinne before God?

Mat. There is: and hee doth declare it himselfe in the ninth chapter of *Genesis*. For, after these words, *Who so sheddeth mans bloud, by man his bloud shall bee shed*, presently hee addeth

addeth, *because in the Image of God made he man.* By which words hee teacheth, that his owne Image which hee hath engrauen in man, is wronged and misused by manslaughter.

Theo. But whether was that image, or likenesse of God, blotted out in man by originall sinne, as it hath beene saide by thee in the second Chapter of the former booke?

Mat. It was indeed: but not so far, that there be no steps of it at all remaining. For the spirituall gifts (as one of the ancients saith) giuen of God to men for their salvation, were by originall sinne taken away; such as bee the true knowledge of his maiesty, & of the worship due vnto him: But the naturall gifts, that is, such as concerne this life, were onely corrupted, as vnderstanding and reason, so far forth as they respect humane things; but they were not altogether taken away, as experience it selfe doth sufficiently witnesse.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement: and withall let vs consider of the vertues which are commanded in it.

Mat. The meaning thereof is this: that wee be meeke, louing peace, and concord, gentle, peace-makers, and desirous of reconciliation. Briefly, in this commandement, God requireth foure things of vs: the first two whereof doe shew what is to be auoided; and the latter two, what is to be done of vs, to the fulfilling of it.

Theoph. Rehearse the first two.

Mat. That we hate no man; much lesse that we hurt either by words or deed. Secondly, that, if wee be offended, wee follow the counsell of *Paul*, that we auenge not our selues: but suffer the iniury patiently, leauing vengeance vnto God, who claimeth it to himselfe; *Vengeance is mine, I will repay it.* For this cause also, in another place, he is called the God of vengeance, or God the auenger.

Rom. 12. 19
Psal. 94 1.

Theoph. But, while we beare iniuries patiently, doe wee not giue our enemies occasion to be more cruell & fierce vpon vs? according to our maner of speech; that wolues be more fierce vpon such as play the sheepe.

Mat. It is indeed certaine, that our enemy sometimes waxeth prouder, and more insolent, because of our meek-

Mat. 5. 39.

nesse: but this is nothing to the matter. For wee ought to be ready rather to beare diuers iniuries, than to reuenge that which we haue receiued; and that by the commandement of Christ, *Resist not euill: but who so shall strike thee on thy right cheeke, turne to him the other also.* And this is the true sense of that place. For, the Lord would not haue vs when we haue receiued one iniurie, to pull another vpon our selues; as the words at the first sight seeme to require. For it were a sinne, not to take heed of an iniurie forseeke, especially when opportunity is offered vs. For, Christ himselfe, and after him *Paul*, when they were stricken vpon the cheeke, did not turne the other; but did greatly finde fault and complaine of the iniurie done vnto them. But concerning that prouerbe, that *the wolues bee fierce vpon such as play the sheepe*, it is a very deuice of the diuell, and therefore most false. For, whosoever in that behalfe doth imitate sheepe, is safe from the assaults of all wolues, being protected by the crooke or staffe of that chiefe shepherd of our soules. But on the contrary side, whosoever, reuenging his iniuries, imitateth the wolues, he goeth out of the fold of Christ (into which they onely bee admitted, that be indeed sheepe) and offereth himselfe a prey vnto *Sathan*; of whom *Peter* saith, He goeth about like a roaring Lion, seeking whome to deuoure.

1. Pet. 5. 8.

Why God
claimes ven-
geance to
himselfe.

Theoph. Why doth the Lord challenge to himselfe the office of reuenging, and so earnestly forbiddeth vs, that we reuenge not?

Mat. It seemeth to be for three causes: the first, because he himselfe is specially offended with the iniury done vnto vs.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, being our chiefe Lord, hee ought much more to be reuerenced of vs, than man which is his creature. As often therefore as we despise and break his commandements, doing iniury vnto any, is not the offence especially done against God?

Theoph. Declare another cause.

Mat. Because hee doth a great deale better know the greatnes of the iniury, than doth he that is iniured: for he pierceth into the hidden & most secret thoughts of men.

Theoph.

Theoph. Declare the last cause.

Mat. Because hee hath the chiefe power to reuenge iniuries, as he shall know to be right & expedient, which we cannot do. For he sometime increaseth the iniury, which thought to haue reuenged it. But although wee had that power in our selues, the affections that rule vs, would carrie vs beyond the bounds of moderation. For these causes hath the Lord challenged vengeance to himselfe, and promised that he will indeed repay it, and so hee hath freed vs from that labour, and those discommodities, which might hurt vs in reuenging. But that hee might take from vs all excuse, hee hath appointed the Magistrate, which in his name should execute vengeance, and hath for this purpose armed him with strength and authority, that with a staied mind hee should consider the greatnesse of the offence, to punish it without any troublous passion, and repress the boldnesse of those which haue hurt vs.

Theoph. Is it therefore lawfull to flie to the Magistrate, and to pursue the punishment of them which haue hurt vs?

Mat. It is lawfull: for, we seeme after a sort to flie to God himselfe, when we craue the helpe of his ministers, so as it be done without any affection of reuenge, hauing this onely in our minds, to helpe forward common peace, while we call those to punishment, of whom it was disturbed and broken.

Theoph. What if the Magistrate refuse to helpe, or if wee cannot goe to him, what thinkest thou is then to be done?

Mat. The whole matter must be committed to God, which one day will take vengeance, both vpon him that hath done vs the wrong, and also vpon the Magistrate, which in this behalfe hath failed in his dutie. And indeed, this is the best way: for if we our selues will reuenge when we be able, we shall do farre more hurt to our selues than to our aduersarie. For we shall hurt but the goods, or the body of our enemies: but we shall so hurt our conscience, that wee bring our owne soule into extreme hazard of vtter perishing. I omit the discommodities that commonly arise of it, while the Magistrate demandeth an account of the fact. Therefore, the best is to beare iniuries patiently; for by that meanes we do not onely turne away
from

from our selues many inconueniences, and innumerable troubles and dangers, but also the Lord, to whom our moderation & obedience is seene, bestoweth his fauour & all kind of blessings vpon vs. And yet the reuenge that is deferred, is not taken away: for the Lord will repay it farre more grievously, than if we our selues had assaied to do it.

Theoph. It is therefore monster-like, that men be so desirous of reuenge, and that there be so few, which in this behalfe suffer themselves to obey God.

Mat. It is indeed: and thereby it appeareth that wee be the children of *Adam*, and heires of sinne, while we doubt not to make our selues equall with God.

Theoph. Wherefore?

Mat. Because the Lord challengeth reuenge to himselfe alone. But there is nothing that man desireth so feruently: insomuch, as many times he offereth his owne life vnto all dangers, that in this point he may haue his desire. Therefore; they onely that haue put off the olde *Adam*, and put on the new, be able to overcome these euill affections, and to leaue vengeance vnto God.

The. Let vs come to those two last things, which the Lord requireth of vs to the fulfilling of this commandment. Declare the first.

Mat. 5. 23.

Mat. That we should goe to him, with whom we be at variance, to be reconciled, according to the commandment of Christ: If thou bring thy gift vnto the altar, and there remembreth that thy brother hath ought against thee, leaue thy gift there before the altar, & go thy waies, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come to offer thy gift. Now hee teacheth by that ceremonie of the Law, which was then in vse, that all the worship which wee offer vnto God, is displeasing vnto him, so long as wee be at variance with our neighbours.

Moreouer, *Paul* warneth, that this reconciliation bee soone made, and that it be not put off from day to day. For he saith: Let not the Sunne go downe vpon your wrath. Which indeed is the most fit remedy to breake off hatred, & to bridle reuenge. For euen as diseases and sores at the first, being easie to be cured, by delay are made incurable, (& that more is) deadly: so hatred will grow past cure, if thou

thou repress it not speedily. For this cause *Paul* after these words, Let not the Sunne goe downe vpon your wrath, by and by addeth, Neither giue place to the diuell.

Theoph. Wherefore doth he adde these words?

Mat. Because hatred, if it be neuer so little a time hidden in our mindes, maketh an entrance for the diuell, who hauing entred vpon our hearts, doth so wholly possesse them, that refusing reconciliation, he stirreth vs vp to the desire of reuenge, till at length hee hath throwne vs headlong to destruction.

Seeing therefore hee is so hurtfull a guest, there is cause that betimes we shut the doores against him, by vnfeined reconciliation to our brother.

Theoph. There is yet remaining another point concerning those things which we are bound to doe for the fulfilling of this commandement.

Mat. This it is: After we haue diligently done our duty, if our aduersarie doe obstinately refuse reconciliation, we leaue not off to loue him, to pray vnto God for him, and in all things to pleasure him, according to the commandement of Christ; Loue your enemies, blesse those that curse you, doe good vnto them that hate you, and pray for them that hurt you and persecute you, that you may be the children of your father that is in heauen. Hither also may be referred the exhortation of *Paul*; If thine enemy hunger, giue him meat, if he thirst, giue him drinke: For if thou doe this, thou shalt heape coales of fire vpon his head.

Mat. 5. 44.

Rom. 12. 20.
21.

Finally, that also is to be marked, which *Paul* presently addeth; Be not ouercome of that which is euill, but ouercome euill with good.

The seventh commandement.

Thou shalt not commit adulterie.

Theoph. Let vs come to the seventh commandement of the Law. How many parts be there of it?

Mat. Two. In the first he forbiddeth adulterie, in the last he commandeth chastitie.

Theoph. What doth the Lord vnderstand by the name of adulterie?

Mat. Not onely the company of man with woman out of

The exposition
of the first
part.

of mariage, but also all kinde of filthinesse, by the which man may be defiled. Moreouer, all the affections of concupiscence; and finally whatsoever stirreth vp vnto lust, and nourisheth it. Of which sort are

Vnlawfull touchings.

Wanton apparelling of the body.

Filthy speech.

Vncleane songs.

Filthy reading.

Too familiar companie with those, who it is very like be led with lust.

Wanton lookes.

Idlenesse, that is the mother of all vices, and namely of whoredome.

Dancings, which are most manifest stirrers, and prouokers of lust.

Eccle. 3. 17. Seeing therfore it is certaine (according to the saying; He that loueth danger shall perish in it) that wee are by nature prone vnto lust; except we diligently take heed of all these prouocations, it will verily come to passe, that at length we shall be driuen to the very act it selfe: which sin notwithstanding is before God esteemed most hainous, especially in those that professe the name of Christ.

Theoph. Why so?

1. Cor. 6. 15. *Mat. Paul* giueth a reason in these words: Doe you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I therfore take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. Know you not, that hee which is coupled with an harlot, is one bodie with the harlot? For he saith, they which were two shal be one flesh. But he which is ioined to the Lord, is one spirit. Flie fornication; euery sinne that a man doth is without the body: but hee that committeth fornication, sinneth against his owne bodie.

But if the iniurie be great that is done vnto Christ, verily that must not bee thought little that is done to our neighbour. For there followeth vpon this the staine of honest families. Moreouer, maidens, otherwise to haue beene well bestowed, are thus not seldome brought to an hainous offence, to their dishonour and punishment. But the iniury shall

shall be greatest, if adultery be committed, that is, if either the man or the woman, or both of them be married. For so the faith of mariage is stained, and the band broken: the whole family is ouerthrowen, and sometimes bastards bee suborned for lawful children, vnto whome the inheritance commeth. For this cause the Lord ordained in the Law that the adulterer should die the death.

Leu. 20. 10.

Deut. 22. 22

Theoph. Let vs come to the other part of this commandement. Is there any other thing to be obserued in it, besides the chastity which we ought to keepe?

Mat. There is. Namely, that God commaundeth mariage to all those, that are not euen inwardly indued with the gift of continency. For as *Paul* saith, It is better to marry than to burne.

The exposition of the second part.

1. Cor. 7. 9.

Theoph. Seeing you haue made mention of marriage, I would haue you shew the causes, why it was ordained.

Mat. They be three.

1. First, procreation of children.

2. Mutuall helpe one of another.

3. The auoiding of fornication.

Theoph. Which is the chiefest of these causes?

Mat. The first, in respect of God, namely the increase of mankind: but in respect of vs; the last, namely the auoiding of fornication.

Theoph. Why saiest thou, that this is the chiefe in respect of vs?

Mat. Because it laieth vpon vs a necessity of marying, which the other two do not. For this cause *Paul* saith; For the auoiding of fornication, let euery man haue his owne wife, & let euery woman haue her own husband. Howbeit if hee speaketh to those that haue not the gift of continencie, whom hee expressly commaundeth in those words to marie. Notwithstanding, heed must be taken that wee defile not so holy an ordinance, by dissolute wantonnes. Of y^e which thing we are warned by the apostle, whē he saith, Mariage is honourable amongst all, and the bed vndefiled.

Theoph. What noteth he in this testimony?

Mat. We are by it admonished, that although the Lord hath ordained marriage to be a remedy against our infirmitie, it may not therefore bee abused to vnbridled pleasures,

1. Thes. 4. 4.

tures, forasmuch as the chastity of marriage forbiddeth it. For if the honesty of mariage doe hide the filthinesse of incontinency, it must not therefore be continually a stirring vp or prouoking of it. Wherefore such as be married may not thinke all things lawfull for them according to the lust of the flesh; but let them cary themselves modestly one towards another in the feare of the Lord, so dealing, that they doe not any thing at all vnbeseeing the honesty and temperance of marriage. Wherefore also *Paul* warneth vs saying: Let euery of you know, to possesse his vessell with holinesse and honour, not in the lust of concupiscence, as the Gentiles which know not God.

The eight commandement.

Thou shalt not steale.

Theo. How many parts be there of this eight commandement?

Mat. Two. The first, the forbidding of theft: the other a commandement contrary to the prohibition, namely that we labour to defend and help forward the profits and commodities of our neighbour, euen as our owne; and to helpe the necessity of others.

Theo. What doth the Lord comprehend vnder the name of theft?

Mat. All euill trades and deceits, by the which we hunt after other mens goods, and seek to get them to our selues: which is vsually done fīue waies.

1. First, by sacriledge, when a man taketh to himselfe the goods dedicated to God.

2. Secondly, by robbery, when any getteth to himselfe any thing of another mans, by open or secret force.

3. Thirdly, by fraud or legerdemaine, when any selleth cōterfait wares for good: or by prating exacteth a greater price, or else deceiueth by a false measure or waight.

4. Fourthly, by vsury, when any for lending mony requireth gaines more than the lawes allow, which indeed hurteth both lender and borrower, the former in his soule, the other in his goods.

Theo. Thou dost not therefore condemne that gaine, which is raken according to the order of law.

Mat.

Mat. I condemne it not.

Theoph. But how agreeth it with the saying of Christ, *Luk. 6. 34*
Lend, looking for nothing againe?

Mat. It is to be vnderstood of the poore, to whome if we be commanded to giue; much more to lend, looking for nothing. But when we lend to the rich, which be able to restore, and that with increase, which also for the most part are wont to borrow to make gaine by it; I see not what letteth but that we may follow the law of the Magistrate, so as it be not against the rule of charity. For hee that borroweth maketh more gaine of it, if he be thriftie, than doth he that lendeth it.

Theoph. There must therefore respect be had of him that borroweth; it must be also enquired, why he doth it, and whether he be thrifty, or a riotous spender.

Mat. I thinke so: for if it be likely that hee will wastfully spend that he borroweth, it ought not to be lent.

Theoph. Let vs come to the fift meane, by the which a man doth vniuſtly cōuey to himselfe another mans goods.

Mat. It consisteth in a more hidden kinde of deceiuing, namely, when any vnder colour of law stealeth other mens goods: which they doe that peruert the law. But vnder these kinds be comprehended the fauourers of theft, the receiuers, and all they which by any meanes giue their consent vnto theft.

The. Is nothing else contained vnder this prohibition?

Mat. Yes verily, namely whatsoever may be a prouocation to theft.

Theoph. Rehearse them all.

Mat. First of all, couetousnesse, that is, desire of riches: *1. Tim. 6. 10*
which the Apostle affirmeth to be the roote of all euills, because there is no wickednesse, bee it neuer so hainous, whereunto men are not driuen and brought by that wicked desire.

Secondly, prodigalitie, because when a man hath wastfully spent his owne goods, he is stirred and moued to get the goods of other men by vnlawfull meanes.

Last of all, idlenesse, for by it men be brought to pover-
ty, by meanes whereof they fall to theft. For this cause *Paul*
warneth; Let him that stole, steale no more: But let him
rather *Eph. 4. 28.*

rather worke with his hands the thing that is good, that he may giue to him that needeth.

Theoph. Now are wee come to the other part of this commandement. What is contained in it?

Mat. First, that to our power we preserue the goods of our neighbour, which in the Scripture is called iudgement, where in many places it admonisheth vs to doe iustice and iudgement. For by the name of iustice he vnderstandeth this, that we giue vnto euery one his right: and by iudgement, that wee giue no consent to any iniurie done to our neighbour, but that wee put it away so farre forth as in vs lieth.

Secondly, wee be commanded to deale with our neighbours according to charity, seeing God hath giuen vs goods, to be stewards of them, to vse them our selues, so farre foorth as necessity requireth, and to helpe the poore and needy. But whosoever keepeth not this rule, hee conueieth to himselfe other mens goods.

Theoph. Doeſt thou thinke therefore, that they which help not the poore and needy, be before God accounted guilty of the sinne of theft?

Mat. Yea verily. And indeede of a farre greater theft, than if a Bailiffe of husbandrie, should refuse to paie his Lord the fruits of his farme. For whatsoever goods wee haue, be the Lords, and he hath giuen them vnto vs vpon this condition, that we should pay a yeerely rent, the gatherers and receiuers whereof hee hath appointed the poore. Whosoever therefore refuseth, or draweth backe to helpe the poore, are guilty before God, not onely of theft, but also of sacriledge: and therefore be altogether woorthy, whom he may depriue of all good things, seeing they doe not according to their dutie acknowledge him, from whom they haue them all.

Theoph. There is therefore a great number of robbers of God.

Mat. A very great number indeed. For a man shall finde very few which in this behalfe doe their dutie. But this ariseth vpon a false opinion, wherewith rich men deceiue themselues: namely, because they imagine that all the goods they haue, whether they came be inheritance, or
were

were otherwise gotten, bee so their owne, that they be wholly and altogether left to their owne will. And therefore that they be not bound to helpe such as neede, if they list not. Moreouer, couetousnesse is ioyned to this vaine imagination, which so shutteth vp in them the bowels of mercy, that they become vtterly vnmercifull. And that for the most part falleth out with them that are most wealthy. For euen as couetousnes most commonly springeth from plenty and abundance: so is it far more fitly nourished and strengthened by it, than by pouerty.

Theoph. There want not some which thinke, that these two words, *mine*, & *thine*, breed al the stirres, wherewith the world in this part of it, is troubled at this day: and doe affirme, that things should bee best ordered, if there were such communitie of goods, as they dreame was vsed among the Christians a little after the death of Christ.

Mat. Whosoever go about to defend that community, they thinke themselves to bee wiser than God himselfe, which is the author of the propriety of goods. This indeed is true, that the most part of men doe abuse it; whereupon doe rise the innumerable confusions, which euery man seeth in the world. But when we vse it as it is meete, and according to the meaning of this Commandement; it bringeth forth fruits most conuenient for the furthering of christian charity, and the preseruacion of humane society.

Theoph. Now describe me those that abuse the propriety of goods, against the meaning of this commandement.

Mat. They bee of three kinds. In the first place they are to be put, which say; Whatsoever is mine, is mine: but whatsoever is thine, is mine. That is, mine owne is not sufficient for me, but I doe also gape for thine. And in this number they are all to be reckened, that by any ill meanes get the goods of other men to themselves.

In the second place we will set them that say; That that is mine, is mine; but that which is thine, is thine. That is, I will not conueigh thy goods to my selfe, neither also will I giue thee any part of mine. And these kind of men refrain indeed from taking away that which is an others, but they cannot abide to pleasure or freely to doe good vnto any.

In the last ranke we will place them, which say; That

that is mine is thine, and that which is thine is mine. That is; I am ready to giue thee part of that I haue, but with this condition, that thou also wilt pleasure me with that which thou hast.

The first of all these therefore be further off from charity then the second, and the second further then the last, who (as it is manifest) come somewhat neerer to it.

Theoph. I see not wherein the last doe offend.

Luke. 14. 12.

Mat. In that they giue no part of their goods, but to those of whom they looke to receiue the like, and therefore obey not Christ giuing them good counsell: When thou makest a dinner, or a supper, call not thy friends, neither thy brethren, nor thy kinsfolkes, nor thy rich neighbour: lest they also bid thee againe, and thou be recompenced. But when thou makest a feast, call the poore, the maimed, the lame, and the blind: and thou shalt be blessed, because they cannot recompence thee, for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the iust. And yet Christ doth not altogether forbid rich men to feast among themselves, or to pleasure one another, so as they haue regard of the poore, as it is meete.

Theoph. How then may these words *mine* and *thine* bee lawfully vsed?

Mat. The contrarie altogether must be said vnto that, that is said of those first: namely, that which is mine is thine: but that which is thine is thine owne. That is, I am ready to make thee partaker of that I haue, although thou art not able to doe the like for me.

Theoph. But if they, to whom wee communicate our goods, haue such wealth as they be able to restore them vnto vs, is it not lawfull to require them againe?

Mat. It is lawfull; so as at the first we shew that that is our meaning. For it is vnlawfull to demand that againe which was giuen. Therefore, alwaies with that caution we must require our goods againe: which we may keepe for the poore, who by their owne labor are not able to helpe their necessitie. For they that be able by labor to sustaine their life, and in the meane time become poore by idlenesse and sloth, be altogether vnworthy to be releued, for the apostle commandeth; if any will not worke, let him not eate

Theoph

Theo. But how much are we bound to giue to the poore?

Mat. So much as their necessitie requireth: For *Iohn Baptist* goeth so far, that he teacheth; He that hath two coats, let him giue to him that hath none. In the which sense, that communie of goods, wherof thou spakest before, is to be taken. Namely, that none of the faithfull thought any thing that he had to be his owne, but did most liberally make all things common, so far forth as the necessitie of the Church required it. For they sold fields and houses, that they might helpe the poore. This is the true meaning of that place: but we must not imagine any confusion of goods, as if the faithfull had liued in common. For although I should not say, that they could not then do it, the words of *Peter* to *Ananias* be against it; If so be thou hadst kept it, did not thy field remaine to thy selfe? and after it was sold; was it not in thine owne power?

Luke. 3. 11.

Act. 4. 34.

Theoph. I confesse, that the communie of goods is so to be taken. Howbeit since that time charitie hath beene very cold in the Church: for now there be none that sell fields or houses to giue to the poore.

Mat. Yea rather they be most few, that distribute any thing to the poore, of their yearely rents and superfluities. Howbeit the cause that is wont to stay vs from liberalitie (namely the feare of pouertie, and desire to increase our wealth) ought especially to kindle vs vp vnto it, if we beleue the promises of God, by the which we are admonished, that they shall neuer come to pouertie, that haue releued the necessitie of the poore; but that such as haue turned their eyes from them shall be full of curses. Therefore hee that with his plentie helpeth the poore, lendeth monie vnto God, who without doubt will pay it againe. Nay rather Christ addeth; who so shall giue a cup of cold water to any of these in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward. So that, of the things that we possesse, nothing may worthily be accounted our owne, but that which we giue to the poore: for, all the rest is scarce safe, at leastwise by death we shall be taken away from the enioying of them. Those that of charitie bee bestowed vpon the poore, are by their hands sent vp into heauen, shall there be diligently kept of God, and at the last day shall be

Pro. 19. 17.

Mat. 10. 42.

restored, and that with increase, for so he hath promised.

Theoph. God therefore yeeldeth much of his owne right, when hee promiseth to restore vs, and that with increase, the things that haue been giuen vnto the poore, seeing we can giue nothing, but of his owne.

Mat. Thou iudgest rightly: but this he doth to stirre vs vp to the loue and desire of charity, whom hee seeth to be very slacke and cold in it.

Theoph. What letteth, but that the Lord should giue riches vnto all? especially to the faithfull, whom hee loueth and hath care of, so as one of vs might well be without the helpe of another.

Mat. The Lord will exercise the charity of the rich, and the faith and patience of the poore. Now by that inequality of goods, he preserueth the society of mankind, which indeed could not stand, if all men were alike in wealth and honour.

The ninth commandment.

Thou shalt not beare false witness against thy neighbour.

Theoph. Let vs goe on to the ninth commandment; how many parts be there of it?

Mat. Two, as of the former three: for false witness is forbidden, and true witness is commanded.

The exposition
of the first
part.

Theo. What doth God vnderstand by the name of false witness?

Mat. Al the things wherwith we may hurt our neighbor with the tongue: Howbeit, this kinde is set downe for an example, according to our first rule, because wee doe most of all hurt our neighbour by false witness.

Theo. I would haue you reckon vp all the seuerall kinds, that be contained vnder this commandment.

Mat. We will therefore diuide them into two sorts. The one, of false witness that is borne in iudgement: The other, that is out of iudgement, concerning the things that we haue to doe with, in dealing with men. Touching false witness in iudgement, because an oath commeth between and the matter either concerneth the life or goods of our neighbour, that wickednesse cannot be committed, but
three

three abominations come foorth at one time together ; namely false witnesse, periurie, theft, or murther. For this cause God appointed the same punishment to the false witnesse, which he, against whom he witnessed had deserved, if he had beene truly accused. Notwithstanding we must know, that there be two kinds of false testimonies in iudgement. The one altogether false, such as was that wherewith Naboth was accused, that hee had blasphemed God and the king. The other false onely in part, and it is called a caull or crafty accusation, when something is either taken from the truth, or put to it, or changed, as they did that testified against Christ, affirming that hee said ; I can destroy the temple of God, and build it againe in three daies ; when notwithstanding his words were these : Destroy this temple, and in three daies I will raise it vp again.

Deut. 10. 19.

1. Re. 21. 13.

Mat. 26 6.

John 2. 19.

Of false witnesse, out of iudgement.

Theoph. Now we are come to those false testimonies, that are out of the place of iudgement.

Mat. There be diuers kinds of them, but we will bring them to thre. And they be these ;

1. Backbiting or slandering.
2. Flatterie.
3. Lying.

Theoph. Let vs therefore in the first place, speake of backbiting. What is backbiting or slandering ?

Backbiting.

Mat. When a man dispraiseth, or mocketh his neighbour being absent, and so empaireth his name and credit. Which is a most gricuous offense ; for a slanderer hurteth three at once.

1. Himselfe.
2. The hearer : for hee is guilty of receiuing the slander which God hath expressely forbidden.
3. Him that is mocked or slandered. Howbeit the slander least of all hurteth him : for his name only is hurt ; but the conscience of both the former is hurt, by a sinne committed against God and their neighbour.

In this ranke are to be placed whisperers, or secret carrie- tales, who indeed do much aggrauate the sin they haue committed in receiuing the slander, when as whispering or muttering it, they giue occasion of many euils, and especially, if it be amplified and enlarged of them, which most

P^{ro}. 6. 16.

commonly falleth out. For this cause *Salomon* saith ; Six things the Lord hateth , but his soule abhorreth the seuenth, namely him that soweth dissension among brethren. Vnder this kinde be all those things contained, that minister occasion of euill speech, namely an euill or false suspicion of our neighbour, without an euident and iust cause giuen ; for it is against christian charity, which, *Paul* saith, is not suspicious.

1. Cor. 13. 5.

Also a rash iudgment of our neighbor, which is expressly forbidden by Christ.

Theoph. What if he, that dispraiseth or reporteth ill of his neighbour, speake the truth, may that be called backbiting or slandering?

Mat. It ought : for he sinneth in a double respect. First, his minde is estranged from the affection of christian charity, yea rather he is mooued to that wickednesse, by a desire of speaking euil, or else, that he may get himselfe praise, by the dispraise of another. Which thing indeed appeareth even by this, that such backbiters passe ouer all the vertues of their neighbour, but their faults they reckon vp, and not seldome enlarge them.

Secondly, he obiecteth those things against his neighbor, not with a mind to amend him, neither doth he make report of them vnto such to whom it appertaineth to admonish him, but hee muttereth and whispereth it to him, that cannot applie any remedie to the fault : yea rather he hath an ill opinion of his neighbour ; which doth not a little hinder Christian charity.

Flatterie:

Theoph. Let vs come to flatterie, which thou saidest was the second kinde of false witness bearing, that is out of iudgement.

Isa. 5. 20.

Mat. This vice is not so hainous as the former, for it is not so farre off from christian charity. Moreouer, the flatterer hurteth only two, namely himselfe, and him whom he flattereth. But the backbiter, as was said, hurteth three at once. Howbeit this sin is condemned of the Lord : for the flatterer fostereth the sins of him whom he smoothly flattereth, and doubteth not to colour or paint them ouer with the name of vertue. For this cause the Prophet saith ; Woe vnto them that call euill good, and good euill.

Theoph.

Theoph. There is behinde, the third kind of false witness out of iudgement, namely lying.

Mat. There be diuerse kinds of this sinne: for some lies proceede from couetousnes, and they be the most hainous, because they most hurt our neighbour. Others be of infirmity and feare, such as was the lie of *Abraham*, saying that *Sarah* was his sister. Others bee of lightnesse for pleasures sake, which notwithstanding be sins: for Christ saith, that whatsoeuer idle word men shall speake, they shall giue account of it in the day of iudgement.

Lying three kinds of it.

Gen. 12. 13.

Eccl. 20. 1.

Mat. 13. 36.

There be some other lies vnder a colour of loue, and are called officious lies, when a man by them thinketh to doe his neighbour good. Because he so deliuereth him either from imminent danger, or from losse or reproch; or else when any lieth for his owne profit, that he may turne such discommodities from himselfe. These be the chiefe kinde of lies, vnder the which also counterfeting and dissimulation is comprehended, when a man faineth that, that is not; as also cloaking and disguising, when a man hideth that that is indeede, to the end the contrary may appeare or seeme to be.

Theoph. Whether thinke you all kinds of lies to be sinfull and euill?

Mat. I thinke they be. For the Scripture condemneth all lying, and warneth vs to be true in all things.

Th. Is it not therefore lawfull sometimes to hide the truth?

Mat. It is not onely lawfull, but also many times expedient, in respect both of the common and priuate profit of our neighbours: Yet with this condition, that we be not bound by oath before the Magistrate to declare it. For otherwise, it should not be lawfull for vs to conceale the truth, except the question were of the peace of the church, or the safety of our brethren. For christian' charity requireth, that we should suffer any thing, rather then bring danger to any brother, much more to the whole church.

As for example, if a man were held prisoner of enemies, he ought rather to suffer all kinds of torments, then to declare any thing that might be to the hurt of his country, or of his neighbour.

Theo. The conclusion is, that thou thinkest it lawfull,

yea sometimes expedient, to conceale the truth ; but that it is not lawfull to lie vpon an occasion , no not for our owne safety, or the safety of our neighbour.

Mat. I thinke so. For the glory of God, who abhorreth lies , ought to be preferred before our owne life , and the loue of our neighbour. Moreouer , the rule of charity requireth it not, that we should by a lie, hide the sinne of our neighbour, which by the commandement of God is to bee punished.

Theoph. Now I see that there is no lie, that is not euil. But thinkest thou not , that it is to be accounted amongst the least sinnes ?

Psal. 56.

Apoc. 21.8.

Mat. The often vse of it, causeth that we thinke it light: but the Scripture iudgeth farre otherwise ; for it saith : O Lord thou shalt destroy them that speake lies. In another place also, reckening vp the sinnes that hinder the saluation of men , it doth by name make mention of this , and numbrell it with murthers, whoredonies , and other hainous offences : for *Iohn* saith ; The fearefull and vnbeleeuing, and murtherers, and whoremongers , and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liers, shall haue their part in the lake, which burneth with fire & brimstone, which is the second death. Neither doth it that without cause : for it directly fighteth with the nature of God, which is the truth ; contrariwise it agreeth with the Diuell, that is the father of lying. But there is no sinne whereunto we do more encline, euen from our birth. Which indeed doth sufficiently shew , that by originall sinne we haue put off the image of God , and haue put on the image of the diuell: as it hath beene declared before, namely in the chapter of Man.

Theoph. Enough hath beene spoken concerning the former part of this commandement, that is, of the prohibition : it followeth therefore, that we come to the other, that is, to that that is commanded.

Mat. In it is commanded, that we helpe our neighbors, with our testimonie, if at any time neede shall so require, both publikely in the place of iudgement, and priuately without that place. Moreouer, that to our power we defend the good name of our neighbour, that we put farre away the slander raised vp against him, at least witnesse by
our

our sower countenance, that we be not pleased with such speeches. For *Salomon* saith; As the North winde driueth away the raine, so doth an angrie countenance the slanderous tongue.

Pro. 25. 24.

Last of all, that in all things wee pleasure our neighbour; if hee shall stand in need of our counsell, to comfort him in his troubles. If at any time he goe astray, moderately and by the rule of loue to admonish him, that hee may be brought againe into the right way. These be the chiefe points, wherein our neighbour may be holpen of vs by our speech, according to the meaning of this commandement.

Theoph. I haue nothing further to aske concerning the exposition of it. Notwithstanding before we come to the tenth commandement, wherein the inward lust or concupiscence of the minde is forbidden, I would vnderstand of thee, to what commandement the forbidding of drunkennesse and enuie is to be referred: which are two most common finnes.

Mat. There be some finnes, which for the diuers respect of the effects, may be referred to the forbidding of diuers commandements. Of which sort it is certaine they bee, which thou hast euen now mentioned. For, we may refer drunkennesse to the prohibition contained in the second, third, and forth commandements of this latter Table. For it bringeth forth brawlings; which sometimes murders and slaughters do follow. Moreouer, although drunkards abstaine from the slaughter of others, yet are they guiltie of the murther they commit against themselues, according to our prouerbe. Gluttonie slaieth more then the sword. Furthermore it stirreth vp men to lust. It also bringeth them to pouertie, which theft followeth. Adde hereunto, that whosoever wasteth the gifts of God so intemperately, with the want whereof many be oppressed, are in that respect holden guiltie of theft.

Against drunkennesse.

Last of all, when they are heat with wine, the tongue by and by breaketh loose; and vnbridledly, by slander and backbiting shamefully defameth the good name of our neighbour.

Theo. Thou hast indeede reckened vp many finnes that
spring

spring from the abuse of a most excellent creature of God.

Mat. But by that, it appeareth, how great the corruption of man is. For, he is not onely an enemy vnto God, but also to himselfe, forasmuch as he abuseth to his owne destruction, the gift that God hath giuen him to his profit & delight. As for example God hath giuen wine to be nourishment, but man turneth it to poison: God hath giuen it to reioyce our heart, but man changeth it vnto heauinesse; God hath giuen it to preserue the health of the body, but man altereth it to the sicknesse of body and soule. To conclude (that which is the greatest thing of all) by it, man wittingly and willingly transformeth himselfe into a brute beast, when as he spoileth himselfe of reason, by the which he differeth from them.

Theoph. Thou saiest true. But I see not what it is, by the which men be allured to that sinne. For neither glory, nor profit, nor pleasure can be sought by it. For, what pleasure is it if a man drinke, not being a thirst?

Mat. No greater than it should be, if a man after dainty cheare did presently eate. But therein the very brute beasts go beyond them in moderation. For, a man shall not see any of them indure to drinke more than is necessary.

Theoph. Hitherto enough of drunkennesse: now let vs speake somewhat concerning enuy.

Of enuy.

Mat. It may bee referred to two commandements. Namely, to the second of this latter Table, and also vnto this fift. For, seeing hatred is the perpetuall companion of it, it compelleth men very oftentimes to murder, which is sufficiently proued by the example of *Cain*.

Gen. 4. 8.

Theoph. Thou iudgeth rightly. For, by enuy *Cain* was stirred vp to kill his brother, because his sacrifice was not accepted of God, but *Abels*. Let vs now see how enuy may be referred to this commandement.

x. Cor. 13. 4.

Mat. Because by it we are moued to powre out manifold slanders, and back-bitings against our neighbour, no lesse then by hatred that continually accompanieth it. But this sinne is most lothsome vnto God, as that which proceedeth of pride, and is contrarie to Christian charitie, whereof *Paul* saith; Charitie enuieth not.

The

The tenth commandement.

Thou shalt not couet thy neighbours house, thou shalt not couet thy neighbours wife, nor his seruant, nor his maid, nor his ox, nor his asse, nor any thing that is his.

Theoph. The tenth commandement is behind, the meaning whereof I haue heard before : wee are therefore to come to the exposition of the text it selfe. Containeth it any other thing besides the desiring of our neighbours house and familie, in it expressed?

Mat. God meant to rehearse such things, the objects whereof for the most part are wont to affect and mooue vs, vnder which hee comprehendeth all of the same kinde; namely all lusts, by the which wee are stirred vp to the transgressing of any commandement of the latter Table.

Theoph. Is not that only lust forbidden in this commandement, whereunto our will giueth consent?

Mat. That lust was contained in the former commandements, wherein not onely wicked deeds, but also counsels, and deliberate consent of the will be forbidden. Therefore in this commandement, the Lord proceedeth further, for hee requireth somewhat more of vs, namely that we be not tickled with any kinde of lust, although our will consent not, yea also be against it.

T. But how canst thou shew that this is the mind of God?

Mat. Most easily, for the Apostle saith; I had not known lust, if the Law had not said, Thou shalt not lust. But it is more cleare than the light, that all men without the Law could haue vnderstood, that concupiscence ioined with consent was sinne : and therefore it is apparent, that the Apostle meant, that the concupiscence which the will resisteth is forbidden by the Law. That may also be gathered by the summe of the Law, wherein the Lord commandeth, that we loue him with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our mind: whereupon it followeth, that wee cannot bee tickled euen with the least concupiscence, but presently there is some thing in our minde void of the loue of God, and therefore that is a sin against the Law.

Theoph. So farre soorth as I see, God in his law requireth of vs most exact perfection.

Mat.

Rom. 7. 7.

Mat. 22. 37.

Mat. 5. 48.

Mat. Hee requireth it indeed. For hee would haue vs to be perfect, euen as hee himselfe is perfect. And therefore hee hath set before vs his Law in stead of a glasse, and a most perfect paterne of righteousness, that the life of man might bee conformable to the puritie of his diuine Maiestie. Insomuch as if there were any that did perfectly keepe it, he should in his life perfectly set foorth the image and likenesse of God.

The summe of the Law. Matt. 22. 37.

Thou shalt loue the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy minde. This is the first and the great commandement. And the second is like vnto this; Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe. On these two commandements hang the whole Law and the Prophets.

Theoph. I am thorowly satisfied concerning the exposition of the Law. Now I would haue the sum of it, which you repeated euen now, to bee declared by you, that I may vnderstand it. And first, why hee comprehendeth all the keeping of the first Table, vnder the loue of himselfe?

Mat. This was done, that wee might vnderstand from what fountaine that loue floweth, and what effects it worketh in vs.

Theoph. From whence floweth it?

Mat. From the knowledge of him, and the assurance of the loue wherewith he loueth vs. For it cannot be that we should loue any, except wee know him, and doe certainly know that we are loued againe of him.

Theoph. What effect worketh that loue of God in vs?

Mat. Willing obedience. For, wee desire to obey him whom we loue, and the more loue increaseth, the more obedience increaseth. By these things therefore it is plaine, that the obseruation of the whole first Table, is contained vnder the loue of God, For he cannot be loued of vs, but we doe in like manner

1. Reuerence him.
2. Put our whole trust in him.
3. Call vpon him, whensoever any necessitie presseth vs.

4. And

4. And giue him thanks for his innumerable benefits. Moreouer, if hee be loued of vs, we will not giue the worship due vnto him alone, to creatures, or to dumbe idols: but according as he requireth, wee will spiritually worship him.

If hee bee loued of vs, it will bee our chiefeft delight to speake of him: which will be done of vs with due reuerence and religion, diligently taking heed that we offend him not in a word.

If (I say) he be loued of vs, his Sabbaths shall be our delight, because wee may speake with him more commodiously, as well by the holy ministerie of the worde and reading, by the which he speaketh vnto vs, as by prayers, by the which we speake vnto him. Moreouer, those delights will engraue such sweetnesse in our minds, that wee shall easily despise all sports and other worldly things, wherein worldly men are wont to spend those daies.

Heereupon it is plaine, that so many as loue God doe keepe the whole first Table.

Theoph. But wherefore doth the Lord adde; that God must be loued of vs, with all our heart, with all our soule, and with all our vnderstanding.

Mat. To the end we may know, that our mind & soule ought to be filled with his loue: and therefore it is required, that he might be most entirely loued of vs aboue all others, aboue parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends, goods, yea, and our selues also. But if at any time a man should be set betwene two loues, whereof the one were that, that is due vnto God, and the other, that that is due vnto parents, brethren, sisters, wiues, children, friends; and that these two loues cannot stand together, so as while we apply our selues to the one, wee neglect the other: then the Lord is to bee preferred before all the other, and all other things are to be neglected, that we may follow him. For so Christ himselfe saith, Hee that loueth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me; and hee that loueth sonne or daughter more than mee, is not worthy of mee. As if hee said, whosoever forsaketh not wife and children, and all his goods, rather than to denie me, is not worthy of mee. And that more is, in the same sense

Mat. 10. 37

sense he saith ; If any commeth vnto mee, & hateth not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethen, & sisters, and euen his owne life, he cannot be my disciple.

Theoph. But vnlesse I be deceiued, the loue of God doth not wholly, but in part seclude the loue of our neighbour.

Mat. It doth indeed wholly seclude all false loue, but the true loue it establissheth : now that is it, which Christ made the summe of the latter Table in these words: Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe.

Theoph. Declare vnto me that true loue which is establisshed by the loue of God : then I will demand of thee why Christ made it the summe of the latter Table.

Luke 1.32.

Mat. Then is our neighbour loued of vs, when we loue him onely in God, and for Gods cause. For, if he be loued of vs, either because he is our kinsman, or friend, without any respect to the loue of God, that loue is not Christian but naturall : and agreeth vnto bruit beasts. For this cause Christ said ; If you loue them that loue you, what thanke shall you haue? for euen sinners loue those that loue them. Therefore also hath hee commanded the loue of our enemies : for therein appeareth most manifestly that whereof we now speake, namely, that our neighbour is to be loued for God : for an enemy cannot be loued for his owne sake, yea rather, he ought to be hated. But when he is considered in God, then he ceaseth to be an enemy, & is made a neighbour. Euen as therefore all flouds doe come out of the sea, and doe fall againe into the sea : so our loue towards our neighbour, ought to begin in God, and to end in God : otherwise it is vitious and euill.

Theo. Wherefore saiest thou, that this true loue of our neighbour, which thou hast euen now expounded, is establisshed by the loue of God?

Mat. Because it is one loue, but the difference standeth in the obiects: for when God saw, that himselfe, because he is inuisible, should hardly be loued of vs, that do so much cleaue to the loue of things that be seene; he hath set our neighbour before vs as a visible obiect, in whom hee engraues his owne image, that wee should worship him by shewing towards our neighbour the same loue that is due vnto himselfe, and bestow vpon our neighbour, some
of

of those duties and benefits, which by good right doe altogether appertaine to his Maiestie : Forasmuch as (according to the saying of *David*) our well doing reacheth not to him, and indeed he hath no need of it. Wherefore as no man can rightly loue his neighbor, but he first lonerh God, so can no man sincerely loue God, but he doth also loue his neighbour, whom he hath so earnestly commended vnto vs. Hence is that saying of *Iohn* : If any saie, I loue God, and hateth his brother, he is a lier : For, he that loueth not his brother, whom hee seeth, how can hee loue God whom he hath not seene ?

Psal. 14. 2.

1. Iob. 4. 20

Theoph. Now I vnderstand what the true loue of our neighbour is, and how it springeth from the loue of God. It is therefore to be seene, why Christ setteth it downe for the summe of the latter Table.

Mat. Because, as the loue of God containeth the whole obseruation of the first Table, as hath beene saide before : so the loue of our neighbour, the whole second Table ; so that he be loued of vs as our selues. Which Christ did not omit.

Theoph. Declare these things vnto me more at large.

Mat. If we loue our neighbours as our selues, wee shall doe to them, all that wee would haue them doe vnto vs : and we wil not do those things, which we would not haue done to our selues. And therefore we will honour parents & other superiors : for if we were in their place, we would be honoured. Wee will doe no despite to our neighbour, which we would not suffer to be done to our selues. Wee will not by adulterie defile the wife, sister, or daughter of our neighbour, because we would not haue so great an iniurie done to our selues. We will not steale his goods ; yea rather, if the matter so require, we will relieue his pouerty with our plenty ; for so would wee haue it done with our selues. We will not beare false witnesse against him, neither backbite him, neither will we vex or mooue him, with scornes, flouts, mocks, and taunts : for we would take it grievously, if it were done to our selues. To conclude, we will couet nothing that is his, forasmuch as if any connected our goods, we would condemne him.

By which it appeareth, that the fulfilling of the second Table

Table is contained vnder the loue of our neighbour, and the breaking of it, vnder the hatred of him.

Theoph. But who is our neighbour, of whome there is mention in this place, and elsewhere in many places in the Scripture?

Who is our
neighbour.

Luk. 10. 33.

Gal. 6. 10.

Mat. Vnder this name bee comprehended not onely friends, kinsfolks, & alliance by marriage, but also al others of whatsoeuer sexe, country, condition, or religion, they be; and that more is, our enemies also, which is plaine to gather, by the example alledged by Christ.

But that letteth not a distinction of persons, of whome we ought to helpe some before others, according to the band wherewith we be bound to them, and by name, their faith. For *Paul* saith, Doe good vnto all, but especially to the houshold of faith. In which words he teacheth, that charity or loue rightly ordered, beginneth with the faithfull, and afterward is deriued vnto others. For, if our loue (which we taught before) ought to be referred vnto God, verily the neerer any commeth to God, so much the more high degree of it doth he deserue: then the rest wee ought to reserue to our kindred and allies, as euery one shall bee ioyned vnto vs by the neerer band.

The other part of this Chapter: For what end good works are to be done, and what is the vse of them.

Theoph. We haue made an end of the former part of this chapter, wherein thou hast declared, what works be worthy the name of good works; let vs therefore come to the other part, which we appointed to a discourse of their end and vse.

The faithfull
cannot be iu-
stified by
works.

First therefore, I demand, whether the faithfull may be iustified by good works? forasmuch as by regeneration they be made fit to doe them.

Mat. Two things let, that it cannot be so.

Theoph. What are they?

Mat. Because iustification, & therefore saluation, goeth before good workes. For, the way which the holy Ghost vseth to make vs able for them, is this, namely that by faith it ioyneth vs with Christ. Whereof Christ himselfe is wit-
nesse

nesse, when he saith; As the branch can beare no fruit, of it selfe, that is, except it abide in the vine, euen so you, except you abide in me, I am the Vine: you are the branches: hee that abideth in me, & he in whom I abide, bringeth forth much fruit. For without me you can doe nothing.

John. 15. 4.

Therefore by faith beeing vnited or made one with Christ, we are iustified and saued, by the imputation of his most perfect holinesse and righteousness: the effects or fruits whereof, be the good works that we do. Therefore, good works go not before our iustification and saluation, but they follow after, as it was well saide by one of the Ancients. But that which followeth after, cannot be the cause of that which goeth before. By this argument *Paul* proueth that wee are not iustified by works. For he saith: You are saued by grace, through faith, and that not of your selues, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast himselfe. For wee are his workmanship, created in Christ Iesus vnto good works, which God hath ordained that we should walke in them. In which words hee sheweth that good works cannot be said to be the cause of our saluation, because they be done by God himself in vs through Christ, after that we be saued by faith in him.

Imputation
is, to haue it
accounted
ours.

Eph. 2. 8.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other thing, which thou saiedst did let, that wee are not iustified nor saued by our good works.

Mat. It is more plaine than the former: namely, because to the end a man may be iustified by works, it is necessarily required, that he haue fulfilled the whole Law, and that he be not found so much as sprinkled or wet with any, euen the very least spot of sinne, before God. For, euen as one little drop of inke staineth a whole glasse of cleare water: so one onely sinne is sufficient to ouerthrow all righteousness of works. For this cause *James* saith; Who-
soeuer keepeth the whole Law, and offendeth in one point, is guilty of all. But it is certaine, that the faithfull in this life, cannot at any time come to the highest degree of that perfection, no not to the middlemost. Therefore the defect or want of righteousness doth by many degrees exceed all the ablenesse vnto it, which any may attaine vnto, by the guidance of the holy Ghost. Therefore

Jam. 2. 20.

by works they ought to looke for the curse onely, which the Scripture pronounceth against those that haue not perfectly fulfilled the Law.

Whether the
faithfull can
fulfill the law.
Rom. 7. 14.
18.

Theoph. How knowest thou, that the faithfull after regeneration cannot fulfill the Law?

Psal. 143. 2.

Mat. Paul doth most plainly witnesse in his owne person, speaking of the condition of a man regenerated, in these words; We know that the law is spirituall, but I am carnall, sold vnder sin: for to will is present with mee, but I find no meanes to performe that which is good. For this cause *Dauid* saith; Enter not into iudgement with thy seruant; for no man liuing shall bee iustified in thy sight.

Luke. 1. 6.

The. But *Luke* speaking of *Zachary*, and *Elizabeth*, saith; They were both iust in the sight of God, walking in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe.

Gen. 6. 9.

Mat. The same thing is also said of *Noah* by *Moses*; *Noah* was a iust and an vpright man in his time. Howbeit, the Scripture saith not, that they were without sin: but that they diligently applied themselues vnto righteousness, and laboured to walke in the commandements of the Lord. In which sense the faithfull in many places are called iust or righteous, aswell to note that zeale by the which they seek to come to the perfection of righteousness, as also that we may vnderstand, that their obedience, notwithstanding it be imperfect, is as acceptable to God through Christ, as if it were perfect.

Theoph. But how knowest thou, that this is the meaning of the Scripture, and that they, who it saith were iust, were not without sinne, seeing the words sound otherwise?

1. Iob. 1. 10.

Mat. It is not hard to gather it out of the things, which presently after be obserued of the scripture it selfe: namely, that *Zachary* beleeued not the words of the Angell, and that *Noah* was drunken. Moreouer, these things bee plainly expressed in it: If we say, that wee haue not sinned, we make God a lier, and his word is not in vs. And indeed if we doe but a little more attentiuely consider of it, what is he that in this life can euer,

Mat. 12. 36.

Love God with all his heart,

Put his whole trust in him alone?

Perfectly rule his owne affections?

So keep his toong vnder, that it send out no idle words? Whereof at the last day, Christ saith, an account must be giuen.

So keepe his eies in order, that they lust not, and his minde that it thinke no vaine thing?

When he employeth himselfe about the worship of God, to doe it with that affection, namely so perfect, pure, and whole, as it is required of him?

Finally, who is it, which letteth not many occasions of doing well, or doing some thing better than he doth it, to escape him?

If our owne heart condemne vs in these, and in many other the greatest things, God (saith *John*) is greater than our heart, that is, knoweth innumerable sinnes, which we our selues know not. Hence is that saying of *David*: Who vnderstandeth his faults? cleanse me from secret faults.

1. *Ioh.* 3. 20.

Psal. 19. 13

Theoph. I haue in thy speech obserued four kinds of sins, whereof men are guilty before God:

1 The committing of euill.

2 The leaving of good vndone.

3 Hidden sinnes.

4 The imperfection of the good deeds, which in small number are done of vs.

Which things, if they haue place in the faithfull, I must needs confesse, that they be far off from being iustified by their works.

Mat. There is no doubt, but these be in the very best, which also the Scripture confirmeth, when it saith: Man drinketh iniquity as water: as if it said, that iniquity were as familiar and common a thing with him, as to drinke. We be all of vs an vncleane thing, and all our righteousnesse as filthy clouts. The children of men are vanity, the chiefe men are liers: to lay them vpon a ballance, they are altogether lighter then vanitie.

Iob. 15. 16.

Isa. 64. 6.

Psal. 62. 9.

Theoph. Doe these things agree to the faithfull, as well as to the vnfaithfull?

Mat. Yea verily: for they of whom these things were written, were faithfull and beleeuers; neuertheles, they did

recker themselves also in that number, as *Esay* by name, for he saith, We all are as vncleane things: and again; All our rihghteousnesse is as filthy clouts. But if our iustice and righteousnesse be such, how I pray thee must it bee thought of our vnrighteousnesse and finnes?

What difference concerning good works, is betwene the faithfull and the vnfaithfull,
Rom. 7. 16.

Theoph. Seeing the matter is so, it seemeth altogether to follow, that there is very little difference concerning good works, betwene the beleeuers, and the vnbeleeuers.

Mat. It followeth not, for sinne onely dwelleth in the faithfull, but it raigneth not: howbeit, in the vnfaithfull and vnbeleeuers, it both dwelleth and raigneth. Therefore euery beleuer may vse that saying of *Paul*. I do not the good that I would. The vnbeleeuers cleane contrariwise, Wee doe not so much euill as wee would: Which, howsoeuer they speake not, they haue it in their minde. As it is to bee seene in drunkards, theeuers, fornicators, ambitious and couetous persons, whose lust can neuer be satisfied. Moreover, the wicked waxe every day worse and worse: contrariwise, the faithfull make proceedings in goodnesse, by the which (notwithstanding they be but small) it is apparent that sinne is overcome of them.

Theo. But how commeth it to passe, that a beleuer, being regenerated and lightened with the holy Ghost, cannot perfectly obey God?

Mat. Because our regeneration is onely begun in vs, but in this life is neuer perfected. For by that meanes the Lord will keepe vs in humility, as also together with it make place to his owne infinite mercy. Therefore, so long as we liue heere, as well our faith, as our repentance, be very farre off from perfection. For there is still behinde in vs, some part of our corruption, which the Scripture calleth flesh, and the old man: it resisteth or withstandeth the part that is regenerate, which is called the spirit, and the new man. And all these things *Paul* notably comprehendeth in these words; The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these be contrary the one to the other, so as you doe not the things that you would.

Gal. 5. 17.

The battell of the flesh & the spirit.

Theoph. Wherein standeth the striuing of the flesh and the spirit?

Mat. 1. The flesh is puffed up with ignorance, and loue of

of the world : but the spirit is endued with the knowledge, loue, and feare of God.

2 The flesh striveth to follow it owne pleasures, and wicked affections, for it is giuen vnto all finnes : but the spirit giueth it selfe to this one thing, that it may obey God, and set foorth his glory.

3 The flesh is full of distrust and impatience : but the spirit humbleth it selfe vnder the mighty hand of God, resteth in his mercy, and fashioneth it selfe vnto his will.

Finally, the flesh holdeth vs in these earthly things : but the spirit lifterh vs vp into heauen.

Moreouer, this contrarietie breedeth in vs a continuall warfare : for the flesh alwaies stirreth vs vp, and setteth vpon vs, with so many intisements and crafts, that except wee take diligent heed, wee bee easily deceiued and overcome of it. For this cause Christ warneth vs, that we should watch; Watch and pray, lest ye enter into tentation; (that is, lest you be overcome of tentation) the spirit indeed is ready, but the flesh is weake.

Mat. 26. 41.

Theoph. Doth the spirit at length go alwaies away with the victorie?

Mat. It doth indeed, but not without great labour : for the flesh many waies woundeth vs : for it causeth vs many times to fall into most hainous sins. Moreouer, although wee doe often overcome, it ceaseth not to renew the battell. For the diuell, the enemy of our saluation, ioineth himselfe vnto it, who vseth that domesticall or household enemy, that he may the more easily enter into our hearts, and at length overcome vs. For this cause *Paul* most feruently desired to bee deliuered from it : for hee saith ; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer mee from this body of death ? Hee calleth it death, because hee thought that continuall battell more grievous than death it selfe.

Rom. 7. 24.

Theo. Now I will returne to the order of our discourse : for I see, that the faithfull cannot fulfill the Law of God. And this also I grant, that the faithfull cannot bee altogether iustified by their workes. But may not this bee done in part, so as Christ supply that which wanteth?

Mat. This doubtlesse cannot be: For *Iames* saith; Who-soeuer keepeth the whole law, & yet faileth in one point,

Iam. 2. 10.

is guilty of all. Therefore *Paul*, intreating of the way whereby we attaine iustification and saluation, excludeth works, not in part, but wholly. As for example : In the Epistle to the Romans, after long disputatiō of this matter, at length he addeth ; We conclude therefore, that a man is iustified by faith, without the works of the Law: and in the chapter following ; To him that worketh, the wages is not counted by fauour, but by debt : but to him that worketh not, but beleeueth in him that iustifieth the vngodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. The same also he writeth in another place ; You are saued by grace through faith, and that not of your selues, it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any should boast himselfe. In which words hee doth sufficiently declare, that good works be of no account before God, to iustifie and saue vs : but that all is to be ascribed to the only mercy and grace of God, by faith in Christ. Moreouer, grace should not bee truly grace in respect of God, if it be not wholly and altogether free: for works and it cannot stand together in the matter of saluation.

Theoph. Why so ?

Mat. Because the one destroyeth the other, as the Apostle testifieth to the Romans in these words ; If we be saued by grace, it is no more of works ; or else were grace no more grace: but if it be of works, it is no more grace ; or els were worke no more worke. Where he sheweth that there is no place for the grace of God, vntil we haue throwen away all trust & confidence in our owne works: which thing y same apostle testifieth, that himself did. For although, cōcerning the righteousness which is by the law, he were without reproofe : hee esteemed all his good workes as dung, that he might be found not hauing his owne righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ.

In another place also, he warneth vs of the same thing ; Yee are made void of Christ, as many of you as be iustified by the law, and are fallen from grace. Now he speaketh to those that would ioine the righteousness of the law, with the righteousness of faith.

Theoph. But some doe obiekt, that the Apostle, whensoever he saith, we are not iustified by the works of the law, speaketh of the ceremoniall law, that was then abolished by

by the comming of Christ, but not of the morall Law.

Mat. That is a vaine shift, which also is most easie to be confuted, by the order of the Apostles speech: and first of all in the Epistle to the Romanes (before he draweth out this conclusion, that is in the third Chapter: By the works of the law, shall no flesh be iustified in the sight of God) in the first chapter he prooueth at large, that all the heathen were full of all vnrighteousnesse, fornication, wickednes, couetousnesse, and other innumerable sinnes. But in the Second he sheweth that the Iewes notwithstanding they made a faire shew of outward holinesse, yet were infected and stained with the same sins they condemned in others. Whereupon it is plaine that in this place, there is onely mention of morall works; and not of the ceremoniall. Likewise also in the Epistle to the Galathians, where he doth especially intreate of the ceremonies, hee alleadgeth both the sentences of *Moses*, namely the curse to those that fulfill not the whole Law, and life to those that keepe it. And in the former indeede he teacheth, that so many as trust to the works of the Law to be iustified by them, be vnder the curse, because they cannot wholly and fully keepe it. And in the other, he declareth, that there is so much difference betweene the Law and faith, that if any man bee iustified by faith, he cannot in any sort obtaine it by the Law. But it is certaine that aswell the curse threatned to the transgressors of the Law, as the promise of eternall life made to such as fulfill it, are not to be restrained to the ceremonies alone, but are also to be referred to the morall Law, and that too by more right: forasmuch as God (as *Hosea* *Hof. 6.6* saith) preferreth mercy before sacrifice. Moreouer, after the Apostle in the second chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians hath affirmed, that we are saued by grace through faith, and that not of our selues, he addeth, But of the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast himselfe. Which words doe most euidently shew, that the Apostle speaketh not of the ceremoniall works, but of morall, which giue men far more large matter of boasting then the ceremoniall do. Finally, when he writeth to *Titus*, that we are saued not by the works of righteousness which we haue done, but by the mercie of God; who

Titus. 3.5.

seeth not that the Apostle doth especially intreat of morall works? to which the title of righteousness agreeth farre better than to the ceremoniall. Which things beeing so, there is no doubt but that the Apostle whensoever he speaketh of the works of the Law, to prooue that wee are neither saued nor iustified by them, doth no lesse meane the morall than the ceremoniall, yea rather that hee doth shut out both from the cause of saluation and righteousness.

Theoph. But why doth he so often call them the works of the Law?

Mat. To teach, that if the works commanded of God, and euen contained in his owne law, bee to no purpose to iustify vs, then the works commanded and deuised by men are much lesse able and fit to doe it.

Theoph. Now do I agree vnto thee. For I perceiue that we are neither iustified nor saued by works, neither in the whole, nor in part, as hath been diligently prooued by thee. And verily (vnlesse I be deciued) there is great iniury done to the glory of God, while men go about to darken the force and power of his grace & mercy, mingling the same with the filthinesse of our works. But seeing the matter is so, why did God giue the morall law?

Mat. The Apostle witnesseth, that it was not to the end we should be iustified or saued by it. For he saith, If there had beene a Law giuen that could haue giuen life, surely righteousness should haue beene by the law: But the scripture hath concluded all vnder sin, that the promise by the faith of Iesus Christ: should be giuen to them that beleue. Notwithstanding it is not vnprofitable to the faithfull, nay rather they reape a double benefit by it, wherein bee comprehended the ends for the which God gaue it vnto vs. I said to the faithful, because it hath this onely work toward the vnbeleeuers, that their condemnation may bee the more heauy: forasmuch as comming to the knowledge of Gods wil by it, they doe willingly runne into the contrary.

Theoph. Let vs consider of that two-fold benefit which thou saidst the beleeuers reape by it: and declare the first.

Mat. It is noted by the Apostle in the Epistle to the Galathians. For after that he hath shewed that we cannot attaine saluation by the Law, hee addeth: wherefore then serueth

Why God
gaue a Law
that we can-
not keepe.

Of the vse of
the Law.
Gal. 3. 21.
12.

The vse of the
Law, in res-
pect of the
vnfaithfull.

serueth the Law ? It was added because of the transgressions, that is, that by the helpe of it, we might acknowledge our sins, as the same Apostle in another place expoundeth it in these words ; by the law commeth the knowledge of sinne. For if we doe examine our works by that perfection which the Law requireth of vs, then it shall appeare most euidently, how many waies we be guilty before God, and therefore what seuerall condemnation we haue deserued.

Gal. 3. 19.

Rom. 3. 20.

Theo. But what profit haue we by that ?

Mat. Much. For, as a sick man, except hee thorowly feele his sicknesse, and perceiue present danger, will not go to the Physitian : euen so the feeling of our sins, and the danger of eternall death, which we see hanging ouer our heads, driueth vs to seeke for that true Physitian of our soules, Christ Iesus, from whom by faith wee may receiue the remedy offered vs in the Gospell: which otherwise wee would haue neglected. Therefore *Paul* saith ; The Law was our Schoole-master to bring vs vnto Christ. And in another place ; Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness vnto euery one that beleeueth. And this is the first benefit which we haue by the Law.

Gal. 3. 24.

Rom. 10. 4.

Theo. Shew briefly the other.

Mat. After that we be regenerated, and therefore made fit to do good works, then the Law teacheth vs whatsoever is to bee performed of vs that we may obey God. For, although we cannot come to the perfection wherunto it leadeth vs : yet wee must set it before our eies, as a marke whereat we are to leuell continually, that daily more and more we may strue to hit it. Heereunto appeartaineth that exhortation of Christ: Be yee perfect, as your father which is in heauen is perfect. The Law therefore is as it were a glasse, wherein we may behold the spots of our soule, and so indeed bee compelled by faith to wash them away in Christs blood. Moreouer, it is a lanterne vnto our feete, which guideth vs that wee goe not out of the right waie from the path of righteousness.

Mat. 5. 48.

Theoph. Seeing good works be not the cause of saluation, it seemeth to follow that they be altogether vnprofitable, and therefore that we need not to be greatly carefull of them.

Mat.

Luk. 1. 75.

Ephes. 1. 8.

9. 10.

Tit. 2. 12.

A three fold
use of good
works.

Mat. 5. 16.

Phil. 1. 11.

Mat. It followeth not. For God hath deliuered vs out of the hands of our spirituall enemies, namely the Diuell and sinne (saith *Zacharie*) that wee should serue him with holinesse and righteousnesse in his sight, all the daies of our life. *Paul* also confirmeth the same thing in the Epistle to the Ephesians. For after that he hath affirmed, that we are saued by grace through faith, and that not of our selues, it was the gift of God, not of works: presently he addeth; For wee are his workmanship created in Christ Iesus vnto good works, which God hath prepared that wee should walke in them. And againe in another place; The grace of God that bringeth saluation vnto all men hath appeared, teaching vs, that denying vngodlinesse and worldly lusts, we should liue soberly, and iustly, and godly in this present world. Thou seest how diligently good works be commended in the Scripture, as those that be acceptable vnto God through Christ, by whose holinesse all their filthinesse, and vncleannesse is couered.

Theoph. But what vse is there of them?

Mat. The vse is threefold, and those indeed most profitable. The first, which is also the chiete, respecteth the glory of God, that ought to be deerer vnto vs then our owne saluation. But by them it is especially aduanced, as it appeareth by the words of Christ; Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in heauen. For this cause *Paul* warning the Philippians to be full of the fruites of righteousnesse which are by Christ Iesus, addeth; To the glory and praise of God.

The second vse respecteth our neighbour. For, by the vprightnesse and integritie of our life, he is prouoked to the same earnest desire and exercise of godlinesse. I passe ouer the good turnes which he hath by our charitie and good works. The thrid vse standeth in this, that by them our conscience is quieted. For, they be testimonies and witnesses of our faith, and therefore of our saluation.

Theo. But how can it bee, that good workes shall bee witnesses of our faith?

Mat. Wee haue already shewed the cause before, namely for that the holy Ghost doth neuer worke faith in our hearts

hearts, without repentance, from whence good works do flow, which therefore be visible or scene testimonies of our inuisible or vnscene faith : euen as the goodnesse of the tree is iudged by the good fruit, and the inward health or soundnesse of a mans body, by the outward disposition of all the parts.

Theoph. Therefore, vnlesse I be deceiued, this thou saiest, that faith cannot be without good works.

Faith cannot
be without
good works.

Mat. I say so. Euen as fire cannot be without heat, and the Sun without light. And verily faith of it owne nature bringeth forth good works. For how can it be that our hearts should be reformed by faith, so as wee doe embrace the loue wherewith God loueth vs in Christ, but that they be also stricken with loue toward him againe, by meanes wherof they both earnestly desire to obey him, and doe labour to auoid rebellion against his Maiestie? I adde further, that faith can no more stand together with an euill conscience, than water with fire. For it cannot bee, so long as sinne raigneth in vs, and we willingly offend God, that wee should be assured of his loue, so as wee may put our whole trust in him, and repose our hope in his fauour and goodnesse, notwithstanding that infinite mercie of Christs death to be knownen and perceiued of vs.

Theoph. As far as I see, faith bringeth forth good works, by the which it is afterward preserued in our hearts.

Mat. Yea verily : euen as fire causeth ashes, wherewith it is afterward cherished, fed, and maintained. But by these things it is plaine, that it is so far off that faith (which notwithstanding some say) should destroy good workes, that rather by it they are built vp and fortified.

Faith the mother of good
workes, of
which it is af-
ter preserued.

Theoph. Seeing then faith cannot bee without good works, it followeth, that all they which boast of it, and doe no good workes, be liars, and deceiue themselues.

Mat. It followeth : and that is the disputation of *Iames* the Apostle against the Libertines, whom he speaketh vnto in these words; Shew me thy faith without thy workes, and I will shew thee my faith by my workes; whereby hee sheweth, that no man can be certaine of his faith, which is inuisible, vnlesse he haue visible testimonies of it, namely, good works. Whereupon it is that the same Apostle in the end

Iam. 2. 18.

Iam. 2. 26.

end of that Chapter concludeth thus ; As the Body without the spirit is dead, even so that faith that is without good workes is dead : that is, it is not true, but a shadow, and a vaine empty likenesse of it.

Theoph. Therefore wee are neither iustified nor saued without good workes, although neither, of them, nor by them.

Rom. 8. 14.

Gal. 5. 22.

23.

1. Cor. 6. 9.

Mat. I grant it. For although the kingdome of heauen bee not the wages of seruants, but the inheritance of children: yet no man is reckoned among the children of God, that is not led by the spirit of God, (as *Paul* speaketh): and therefore doth the works of the spirit, such as are these, loue, ioy, peace, long suffering, gentlenesse, goodnesse, faith, meekenesse, temperance, and such like. Therefore the same Apostle in another place giueth warning; Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers nor wantons, nor theeues, nor couetous, nor drunkards, nor railers, nor extortioners, shall inherite the kingdome of God. The same thing also doth Christ himselfe confirme, when he saith; Not euery one that saith to me, Lord Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but hee that doth my fathers will that is in heauen.

Mat. 7. 21.

Mat. 5. 20.

And againe in another place ; I say vnto you, except your righteousness exceede the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

Theoph. Now do I consent vnto you, and doe acknowledge that good workes be not vnprofitable, although wee bee neither iustified nor saued by them : Yea rather that they be of speciall vse, and therefore that the faithfull with all their hearts should giue themselves to them, forasmuch as they serue

1. To the glory of God,
2. The edification of our neighbour,
3. And to the confirmation of our faith and saluation.

Mat. Adde heereunto, that God to whom they be acceptable through Christ, rewardeth them with sundrie blessings both spirituall and temporall, according to the promises almost without number contained in his word. Moreover, hither is to bee referred the word of Reward, which

which is vsed in many places in the scripture: as when *John* exhorteth the faithfull to perseuerance, hee saith; Looke vnto your selues, that wee lose not the things wee haue wrought; but that yee may haue a full reward. Christ also speaking of those which suffer persecution for righteousness sake, saith; Great is your reward in heauen. In another place also, Whosoever shall giue a cup of cold water onely, to one of these little ones in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward.

2. *Ioh. 8.*

Mat. 5. 12.

Mat. 10. 42.

Theoph. Seeing therefore God promiseth reward to our works, it seemeth they deserue somewhat.

The confutation of merit.

Mat. It followeth not: For that reward proceedeth of his meere & vnderferued fauor, without any desert of ours.

Theoph. Doeſt thou take from the faithfull all meriting with God?

Mat. Not I, but the word of God: wherein, his owne mercie is establiſhed, and merit is ouerthrowne euen to the very ground; for these two cannot stand together. Furthermore, if any man will a little more diligently examine the nature of Merit or Desert, he shall neuer finde that it hath any place before God.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because, that in deseruing any thing, this is

1. First required, that we be nothing in his debt, of whom we desire to deserue.

2. Secondly, that we bring him such things as bee our owne.

3. And last of all, that that which we bring or bestow, be equall, or as much woorth, as the thing that wee seeke to deserue. If but any one of these conditions faile, it can be no merit or desert. How much lesse therefore, if they be all wanting together? But they be wanting in all our good works.

Theoph. Declare these things vnto me one after another particularly.

Mat. First, whatſoever good works may bee performed of vs, are due vnto God by a double right, namelie of our creation and adoption. Hereupon is that saying of Christ warning his Disciples, When ye haue done all the things that are commanded you, say, Wee bee vprofitable seruants:

The examination of the merit of works.

Luk. 17. 10.

uants : for we haue done nothing, but that which was our dutie to doe.

Phil. 2. 13.

Moreover, it is certaine, that whatsoever good thing can be done of vs, is from God : who worketh in vs both the will and the deed.

1. Cor. 47.

Therefore it was notably saide of one of the ancient fathers; God rewardeth his owne good works in vs, and not ours. *Paul* also saith; What hast thou, that thou hast not receiued? and if thou hast receiued it, why dost thou boast, as though thou hadst not receiued it? Therefore among men indeede there may bee merit or desert. For the husbandman after he hath digged all day in the vineyard, shall receiue his reward by desert. But with God we can deserue nothing, but that he should punish vs for our offences.

The obiection of the defenders of merit.

Theop. The defenders of the opinion of merits, do obiect, that good works be not meritorious of themselves, but in respect of the promise of God himselfe, wherein hee hath promised those things, which otherwise were not due.

The answer to it.

Mat. They are not by this pretence acquitted of sacrilege or robbing God. For, they attribute that to themselves, which appertaineth to God alone. For, when God made that promise vnto vs, hee did it of his meere grace and fauour, and therefore merit or desert is shut out. But I wil make the whole matter plaine by a familiar example. If any King should promise his bond-slaue an hundred thousand crownes, vpon condition that hee diligently doe a businesse committed to him, the bond-slaue hauing done the commandement, may require the gold, yet not because he hath deserued it. But we that haue not fulfilled the condition enioyned vs, how much lesse haue we deserued the reward promised to our works?

Theoph. What letteth that we fulfill it not, when we obey the Lord from the heart?

Of the imperfection of our works.

Mat. The cause hath beene declared already before; namely, for that there can bee no good thing done of vs that is not vncleane and defiled. For as the most pure water, if it run through an vncleane conduit, is corrupted with the stinke of it: so the good works that God worketh in vs, be foiled and stained with the filthinesse of our flesh. Therefore euen as the promise of reward is altogether free,

free, and without respect of any desert, so is the fulfilling of that promise.

Theoph. Why therefore doth God promise a reward to our works, which he may by right require of vs?

Mat. That, that promise may be as a spurre vnto vs, by the which wee might be driuen forward, to the desire and doing of them: and that indeed not without cause: for we are by our nature very slacke vnto them.

Theo. There is one thing behind, which I will demand of thee; namely, concerning that which was said of thee before, that the obedience which is vndertaken vpon hope of reward, is not acceptable vnto God.

Mat. This also is indeed true, if that affection raigne in vs as it doth in the vnfaithfull. Howbeit, it shall not hurt, so as the loue and feare of God go before, if we be allured and drawne on to his seruice; by the hope and looking for of the reward: And on the other side, be kept and held from disobeying him, by the feare of the punishment, that is, of eternall death.

Theoph. But ought not the loue of God to be sufficient, to bring forth that obedience in the hearts of the faithful, without borrowing any other spur from elsewhere?

Mat. If our regeneration were perfect, as is the regeneration of them which liue blessedly in heauen, wee should know God perfectly, whereby we should be stirred vp to obey him perfectly. But because there is alwaies behinde in vs something not regenerated, which of it owne nature is in bondage, full of ignorance, without loue of God, it is necessary, that we should be stirred vp to that obedience, by the hope of reward: and on the other side, by feare of punishments be held backe, and kept in obedience. Heereupon it is, that God both rewardeth our good works in this life, according to his promises, and also correcteth our slacknesse and insolencie by diuers afflictions which hee sendeth daily: whereby it appeareth, that he is true, as well in his promises, as in the execution of his threatnings. But seeing you haue nothing more to propound, I would aduise, that wee put off the rest of the disputation till another time, for I see that it is now almost noone.

Theo. I haue heard your discourse of good works, as also
the

The vse of the
doctrine of
good works.

the exposition of the moral law, with so great delight, that the time of our speech hath seemed to me very short.

Mat. Indeed it is a most pleasant thing to intreat of good works, so as it be done holily, and by the rule of Gods word. Howbeit, that shall be little, except the practise bee adioyned, which verily getteth praise with men, comfort to the conscience, and profit with God. Therefore true and sound vertue is greatly commended, before vaine prating, or the vnprofitable idle knowledge of it.

Theop. I doe remember an excellent similitude, which I haue oftentimes heard of thee, and it is this. As a pretious garment shut vp in a chest, is altogether vnprofitable; but if it be put on, it is an honour, delight, and profit vnto vs: so it is with good works: for, the knowledge and vaine discoursing of them, is of no vie, except they be put in practise.

Mat. It is most true. Therefore I pray God, our heavenly Father, that as hee hath imprinted his Law in our mindes, so hee will ingraue it together with his loue and feare in our hearts, by the power of his holy spirit; that being alwaies cloathed with righteousnesse and true holines, we may worship him with due reuerence and humility, all our life: that so

1. He may be glorified of vs,
2. Our neighbour edified,
3. And our faith and saluation confirmed, through Iesus Christ our Lord.

Theoph. So be it.

CHAP. II.

Of Prayer: which hath the chiefe place among good works, to testifie and confirme our faith.

THEOPHILVS.

OUr helpe is in the name of the Lord, which hath made both heauen and earth.

Mat. So be it.

Theoph. Concerning the doctrine of good works, I am sufficiently satisfied (most dearely beloued brother): for I haue learned, that they onely be woorthy the name of good works, which God hath commanded in his Law:
also,

also, that they bee not the causes of our iustification and saluation: neuerthelesse, that they be profitable, both to the glory of God, and to the edification of our neighbours, and very much to the assurance of our saluation and faith.

Now I demand of you, which hath the first place among good works?

Mat. True prayer, namely, that which is powred from the heart vnto God, with this confidence, that wee shall be heard.

Theoph. Why giuest thou it the chiefe place among good works?

Mat. Because by the helpe of it wee obtaine this, that we be able to performe the other good works. Moreouer, it yeeldeth vs the greatest testimonie of our saluation.

Theoph. Whence is it, that it yeeldeth a fuller testimony of our faith, then the other good works?

Mat. From hence, namely because praier with assured hope of being heard, cannot bee made, vnlesse first we be perswaded of the loue and fauour of God towards vs. For as *Paul* saith; How shall they call vpon him, in whom they haue not beleueed? For this cause the same Apostle affirmeth out of the prophesie of *Ioel*; Whosoever shall call vpon the name of the Lord shall be saued.

Theoph. But from whence haue we that assurance? seeing we be guilty vnto our selues of our owne vnworthines: by the which we deserue, that both we our selues and our praier should be put backe from the seate of his Maiesty.

Mat. By the intercession or mediation of Iesus Christ, who (as it was shewed by vs in the Chapter of Faith) doth alwaies offer vp to God the Father the merit of his death, for full satisfaction of all our sinnes. Whereupon it cometh to passe, that he is made mercifull vnto vs, and such a one as will bee intreated of vs, so as wee shall receiue whatsoeuer we aske of him. And that doth the Scripture teach in these words; We haue an aduocate with the father, Iesus Christ.

Theoph. It followeth therefore, that the office of the Mediator, is by a most strait band ioyned with the office of the redeemer.

Mat. It is so, and therefore *Iohn* after these words; We

M

haue

Which is the chiefe good worke.

A short description of true praier.

The excellencie of praier.

Rom. 10. 13.
14.

1. Ioh. 2. 1.

1. Iob. 2. 2.

1. Tim. 2.

3. 6.

The confuta-
tion of the
error, about
praier to
Saints.

haue an aduocate with the Father Iesus Christ the righteous, presently addeth, And hee is the propitiation for our sinnes. Heereupon it is, that *Paul* ioyneth both the offices together, when he saith; There is one mediatur of God and man, the man Christ Iesus, which gaue himselfe a ran- some for all men.

Theoph. Seeing therefore, one is our redeemer, euen Christ Iesus, it seemeth to follow, that he alone can also fulfill the office of the mediator for vs with the father.

Mat. It followeth, and that indeed necessarily: and for this cause, in the places which we haue heard; we reade it written; One aduocate, one mediatur: for the word *one*, is expresly added, to the end we might know, that besides him alone, there can be no other.

Theoph. Therefore they deale foolishly, and without any good ground, whosoever seeke other patrons and medi- atours besides Christ.

Mat. Very foolishly. For they forsake the Creator, to goe to the creature: the Lord, to goe to the seruant: the most dearely beloued Sonne of the Father, which is in the highest authority and fauor with him, to pacifie his wrath, to goe to those, which lacke all things that be required to wash away sinnes, and therefore bee vnable to make our praiers acceptable & of force. Moreouer, they doe esteeme Christ, as he were not sufficient enough for the office of the mediator, & therefore deny him to be our true Sauour: For if he be fit and sufficient for so great an office, why do they chuse to themselves other mediators beside him? If they say they doubt not, but that he is both most powerful and most fit for this thing, but do doubt somewhat of his will; they doe therein very much bewray themselves to be vnbelecuers, which refuse to giue credit vnto him, after that he hath giuen vs so notable a pledge of his exceeding loue: namely, when hee vouchsafed both to take vpon him our humane nature, and to suffer the death of the crosse for our redemption. Adde heereunto, that most louingly hee calleth vs vnto himselfe by his word, when he saith; Come vnto me all ye that labour & be laden, & I will cause you to haue ease, and you shall finde rest vnto your soules.

Mat. 11.

28. 30.

Finally, wither soever they turne themselves, they shall
neuer

neuer escape, but be found iniurious against Christ, forasmuch as they take from him the office of the mediator, purchased by his own blood, to give it to blessed creatures that be in heaven.

Theoph. They object, that the office of Christ is not translated by them to the dead Saints, seeing they end all the prayers they make to God, with these words, Through Iesus Christ our Lord: Whereby they say is declared, that the chiefe honour is given to Christ himselfe.

Mat. It is a craft of Satan, by the which hee would haue the wickednesse of praying to Saints to be hidden, and so the manifest wrong that they offer vnto Christ, which put ouer his office vnto Saints, while they pray God, that by their merits and intercession, he will grant the things that they desire, and at length adde, through Iesus Christ our Lord. Wherein they imitate and follow him, who after he hath given his Prince a blow, would humbly doe him reuerence.

The confutation of it.

Theoph. Is it therefore vnlawfull for the faithfull being alive, mutually among themselves, the one to commend the saluation of the other vnto God by prayer? seeing it cannot be, but something is taken away from the intercession of Christ

Obiection.

Mat. Not so: for many causes may be alledged, for the which, the one is not onely vnprofitable, but also forbidden, and therefore to be auoided: but the other not onely to be lawfull, but also profitable and necessary.

The confutation of the obiection.

Theoph. Declare those causes.

Mat. I will make foure chiefe.

1. Because loue, that is so much commended vnto vs, is both cherished and increased by praying one for another. But this can haue no place in the dead, of whom *Salomon* speaking saith; Both their loue, and their hatred and their enuy is now perished, and they haue no more portion for euer, in all that is done vnder the Sunne.

Eccles. 9. 6.

2. Because, praying one for another, wee thinke not to be heard for his sake that praieth for vs: which they doe that pray to the Saints departed, and by that meanes give vnto them the office of Christ.

Theoph. But it may bee, that the same thing may befall them

them, which desire to bee holpen with the praiers of the godly that bee aliue : for why may not some thinke, that they shall be heard for their holines and good works sake?

Mat. I grant, it is not impossible that some should after that manner abuse the praiers of the godly : but there is the least danger in this behalfe, if it be compared with the other. For, it cannot be in any, but the ignorant and vn-skilfull, for whose ignorance wee ought not to refuse that so holy an ordinance of God. But the intercession of departed Saints doth bring with it most manifest danger: for no man can pray vnto them, but he thinketh for their sakes to obtaine the things which he desireth of God. The prooffe whereof are all the formes of praiers written by such as worshipped them.

Theoph. Goe forward, alledge the third cause.

3.

Mat. The faithfull, that be aliue, may know the necessities one of another, and pray to God for them : which the faithfull departed cannot. I am not ignorant what they bee wont to obiekt, namely that the Saints departed doe, in God, as it were in a glasse, see all the things that bee done in this world : but that it is altogether to diuine or guesse, without any testimony of Scripture.

Theoph. Declare the fourth cause?

4.

Mat. That is the chiefe: namely, because the praiers of the godly being aliue, one for another, are grounded vpon the testimony of the word of God, also vpon examples & promises, by the which it is confirmed, that they shall not be in vaine: but the praiers of the dead are neither grounded vpon any testimony of Gods word, neither vpon promises nor examples.

Theoph. Say you so?

Rom. 14. 13.

Mat. I say it: and therefore it is not done of faith; for the word of God is the onely foundation of it. Wherefore *Paul* affirmeth; that whatsoever is not of faith is sinne. And this reason is sufficient to ouerthrow the intercession of saints departed. For who can endure this, that man should lift vp himselfe aboute God?

Theoph. I doe now confesse, that all praiers which are made to saints departed, for this end that they shold be our intercessors and mediators to God, are to be cast out and
biffled

hiffed at : and that Christ alone, whose office this is, is sufficient.

Mat. Yea truly, it is extreme madnesse for any to seeke to himselfe another mediator : forasmuch as he can doe it most perfectly, because he lacketh none of the things that suffice to pacifie God, and to cause him to bee mercifull vnto vs. Moreouer, he loueth vs most dearely, and therefore is touched with pity vpon our infirmities. He knoweth our praiers, presently when they be conceiued. He commandeth that wee should come vnto him, as often as wee will craue any thing at the hands of God.

Finally he assureth vs, that we shall obtaine al the things which we shall aske in his name, when he saith, Verily, verily, I say vnto you, whatsoeuer yee shall aske of the Father in my name, he wil giue it you. Hitherto haue ye asked nothing in my name: aske and you shall receiue. And in another place he saith: Whatsoeuer you shall aske in my name, I will doe it.

Theoph. What meane these words, To aske any thing in the name of Christ?

Mat. It is to beseech God, to heare our praiers, not indeed hauing respect to our vnworthinesse, but to the merit that is continually offered to him of Christ Iesus for vs. Therefore to aske any thing of God in the name of Christ, is answerable to his intercession with the father for vs, and that more is, an approbation or allowance of it, and the way to be partakers of it.

Theoph. But ought the promise of Christ, wherein he assureth vs, that wee shall receiue whatsoeuer we aske in his name, to bee extended to all things that shall come vnto our mindes, without putting any exception?

Mat. Not so: for our desires, for the most part be euill: which if they were fulfilled, would bee to our destruction rather than to our profit. Therefore Christ vnderstandeth onely those things which concerne the glory of God and our commoditie and saluation: al which things indeed he hath in few words comprehended in that forme of praier, which he hath giuen vs; namely, Our Father which art in heauen, &c.

Theoph. Must we therefore vse no other forme of praier?

Why Christ
onely suffi-
ceth the
faithfull to
doe the office
of the media-
tor with the
Father.

Ioh. 16. 23.

Ioh. 14. 13.

Mat. If you respect the matter of substance, we may vse no other: but it is in our libertie to enlarge it: wherof the holy Scripture yeeldeth vs many examples, in those formes of praier which it setteth before vs; namely, the Psalmes: all which vndoubtedly bee referred to this forme appointed by Christ.

The exposition of the Lords Praier.

Theoph. Let vs examine the forme of praier that Christ hath deliuered: how many parts be there of it?

The summe
and parts of
the Lords
praier.

Mat. In the beginning it containeth a Preface, and afterward six petitions. The first three whereof doe immediately respect the glory of God. But the latter three containe those things that appertaine to our selues, both for the helpe of this life, and for euerlasting saluation. And they be therefore placed after those that concerne the glorie of God, to the end we might vnderstand, that the latter three be not rightly conceiued and made, vnlesse they bee referred to the glorie of God, as it were vnto their proper end, and that therefore they shall not be heard, according to the saying of the Apostle; You aske and receiue not, because you aske amisse, that you might consume it vpon your lusts.

m. 4. 3.

The Preface of the Lords praier.

Our Father which art in heauen.

Theo. Let vs consider of the preface of the Lords praier.

Mat. It is contained in these words: Our Father which art in heauen.

Theoph. Who is that Father, vnto whom Christ biddeth vs to flie?

Mat. It is the first person of the holy Trinity, namely, the Father of our Lord Iesus Christ.

Theoph. Is therefore one onely person of the Trinity to be praied vnto?

Mat. Wee must know, that in true praier we are onely the instruments of God, who alone in that, as in other good works, worketh the things that concerne our saluation. But that is to bee vnderstood of all the persons according to the distinct propriety of euery of them. For the ho-
ly

ly Ghost praieſt in vs, as appeareth by the ſaying of the Apoſtle; The ſpirit maketh requeſt for the ſaints according to the will of God. The Sonne offereth our praier to the Father. This praier the Father receiueth, and louingly heareth. Therefore, lawfull and true praier is that which is made from the heart, the holy Ghost ſtirreth vs vp, which alſo is directed to the Father in the name of Ieſus Chriſt his Sonne. Indeed we haue an example in the holy Scriptures of a certaine praier made to the Sonne, in the which this diſtinction of the perſons is not obſerued: namely in that which *Steuens* made while he was ſtoned: Lord Ieſus receiue my ſpirit. Howbeit this example, and if there be any ſuch other, is not contrary to the rule of right praying. But becauſe we haue begun the expoſition of the Lords praier, we are to returne to the iſſue of the ſpeech wee haue in hand: and it is this, that in this place wee bee taught that our praiers muſt be directed to the Father: which *Paul* teſtifieth that himſelfe did, in theſe words: I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Ieſus Chriſt. We may alſo pray vnto Chriſt, not onely as he is God, but alſo as he is the Mediatour, that is, as he is one perſon conſiſting of two natures: yet ſo, as the Deity be the obieſt or the thing which wee ſet before our eies in praying. Likewise alſo we may pray to the holy Ghost, diſtinguiſhed from the other perſons, who with the Father and the Sonne is very God. And indeed the godly that exerciſe themſelues in ſuch praiers, doe a thing profitable and worthy to bee done, ſo as they be not diſtracted with the deepe meditation of the diſtinction of the three perſons, but alwaies haue their mainds fixed and ſetled vpon the vnity of the eſſence. This alſo is to be obſerued, that the name of God, and of father, is not ſeldome in the Scripture referred to each of the perſons. And let theſe things be ſpoken by the way. For it is not my purpoſe at this time, to declare all things particularly that appertaine vnto this place.

Rom. 8. 27.

Act. 7. 59.

Eph. 3. 14.

The. But why doth Chriſt commaund vs, that comming to his father, we ſhould call him by the name of our father?

Mat. Not onely that we ſhould gather, ſeeing he is the father of Chriſt, that hee is alſo our father: but eſpecially for three cauſes.

Mat. 7. 9.
10. 11.

1. First, that wee may call vpon him with true faith, that is, that we may beleue that he which is our father will not deny vs the things which we shall aske of him, according to that saying of Christ; What man is there of you, who if his sonne shall aske bread of him, will giue him a stone; and if he shall aske fish, will giue him a serpent?

2. Another cause is, that we might vnderstand (which hath beene already said of vs) that we ought not to drawe neere vnto God, but in the name of his naturall son Iesus Christ. For in him alone we are adopted and made his children.

3. The third, when wee are commanded to call him our father in common, rather then particularly and properly, my father, we be taught, that true charitie & brotherly loue towards our neighbours is required of vs in praier, forasmuch as we be all the children of the same father, and heires of one and the selfe same inheritance. Whosoever therefore make not their praiers to God in the name of Iesus Christ, or do carry priuy hatred or enmity against their brethren, cannot pray to God with this forme of praier.

Theoph. Why hath Christ added these words; Which art in heauen?

Mat. Not to signifie that his Maiestie is shut vp within heauen: which indeede (seeing it is infinite) the whole world is not able to containe: But

Mat. 7. 11.

1. That he may be distinguished from our earthly fathers, and that withall we might vnderstand how much better he is then they, and more able to helpe vs. Therefore Christ said to his Disciples; If ye therefore which are euil, can giue good gifts to your children, how much more will you father that is in heauen giue good things to them that aske them of him?

2. Secondly, those words are added, that comming to God, we should lift vp our minds aboue all earthly and transitorie things, how beautifull or goodly soeuer.

3. Finally, that we might earnestly & indeed acknowledge the incomprehensible greatnesse, the marvellous wisdom, and infinite power of him, whom we pray vnto: which verily doe far more clearely shine in the heavens, then in the earth, to the end we might worship him with
the

the more reuerence, and rest vpon him with greater trust and assurance.

The first petition.

Hallowed by thy name.

Theoph. Let vs come to the three petitions that respect the glorie of God. Which is the first of them?

Mat. It is contained in these words; Hallowed be thy name.

Theoph. What is the meaning of it?

Mat. We desire of God, that the knowledge of him may be spread abroad thorowout the whole world, that so his name may be sanctified, that is, that all men may giue him his due honor.

The exposition of the first petition.

Theoph. Wherefore makest thou mention of the knowledge of God, which Christ mentioneth not in this petition?

Mat. Because God cannot be truly hallowed and worshipped, except the knowledge of him goe before. For we cannot worship nor praise him, of whom we be ignorant, and whose excellency and power are vnkowne to vs. Hence is that saying of the Prophet; According to thy name (ô God) so is thy praise vnto the worlds end.

Psal. 48. 10.

Theoph. Is not this hallowing of the name of God, the same with that whereof thou spakest in the exposition of the third commandment?

Mat. The very same; and therefore the exposition of that commandment, may be instead of an exposition to this petition, and shew how the name of God is to be hallowed.

The second petition;

Thy kingdome come.

Theo. Let vs passe ouer to the second petition.

Mat. It is this; Thy kingdome come, Now in it we desire of God, that by the knowledge of his Maiestie being giuen vnto men, he will cause all to be gathered into the Church. For in it he raigneth by the scepter of his word, and by the power of his spirit.

The exposition of the second petition.

Theoph. That I may the more easily come to the true meaning

meaning of this petition, I do first demand of thee wherefore that rule and dominion, which God exerciseth ouer his Church, is called his kingdome: after I will aske thee, concerning the word *Come*.

Of the king-
dome of God

Mat. That rule is called by the name of kingdome, for the likenesse it hath with earthly kingdomes.

Theoph. Wherein standeth that likenesse?

Mat. In foure heads or principall points, namely because in the Church there be

1. One King.
2. Subiects.
3. Lawes.

Luke. 1. 13.

4. *Gouernors*: who, as in earthly kingdomes, haue the charge to see to the keeping of those lawes. For, in the Church there is one king, namely Iesus Christ, who by his Father is appointed Lord ouer it, to rule and gouerne it; which is confirmed by the words of the Angell to *Marie*; The Lord God will giue vnto him the seate of his father *David*, and he shall raigne ouer the house of *Iacob* for euer, and there shall be no end of his kingdome. Therefore the kingdome of God and the kingdome of Christ, is one and the selfe same. The faithfull be the people of this kingdom, whom Christ hath redeemed with his death, and set free from the tyranny of the diuell, that he might deliuer them vp to his owne kingdome, to become his subiects. The lawes of it are the word of God, wherein all things bee commanded and declared, that appertaine either to the humble seruice and obedience of that king, or to the concord of the Citizens and subiects. The officers which are specially occupied about this kingdome, are the ministers of the word, or pastors: vpon whom this charge is laide, that they preach the word, and see to the keeping of those lawes. Who also (as the Apostle speaketh) haue in readinesse reuenge against all disobedience.

1. Cor. 10. 6.

Theoph. I haue heard of the likenesse between the kingdome of God and the kingdome of men: now I desire to vnderstand wherein they differ.

Mat. 1. First, all the things in the kingdome of God are spirituall: namely, the king himselfe, his glory, power, subiects, lawes, rewards, punishments of the rebels. Therefore
Christ

Christ said vnto Pilate; My kingdome is not of this world.

Ioh. 18. 36.

2. Secondly, Christ requireth no such thing of his subjects, as earthly kings are wont to aske: but contrariwise doth continually enrich them with his owne gifts and spirituall riches.

3. Thirdly, he maketh them all partakers of his kingly dignitie, which earthly kings cannot doe.

4. Fourthly, hee doth not onely command, as other kings do, but giueth vs his own spirit, which putteth power into vs, whereby we are made able to yeeld our humble and dutifull obedience vnto his commandements.

Finally, all their kingdomes bee subiect vnto alteration and change, but this kingdome is inuincible, and shall endure vntill the last comming of Christ.

Such is the kingdome of God and of Christ, which indeed (as hath been said) is not to be referd but to that rule which he exerciseth ouer his beloued children, and those that be receiued into the Church.

Theoph. Who therefore hath the rule ouer the vnbeleeuers and wicked?

Mat. The diuell: and for this cause, hee is called the Prince of this world; yet notwithstanding the Lord hath the chiefe rule and power, both ouer the vnbeleeuers, and ouer their captain, which by his iust iudgement hath made them subiects to that vnbeleeuing tyrant: to the end they may be vexed & tormented of him according to their deserts, forasmuch as they haue refused to obey Christ, who is a most louing & merciful king. Moreover, that kingdom of Sathan hath immortall hatred against the kingdome of Christ; the head (I say) of that kingdome, namely Sathan and his souldiers, whom hee stirreth vp to make outward warre against the kingdome of Christ, while hee in the meane time assaulteth it within. For both of them labour and strue with all their might, to spoile & sacke that kingdome of Christ. But they do it in vaine: for, how much the more furiously they seeke to ouerthrow it, so much the more doe they helpe it forward: and at length pull vpon themselues viter ruine and destruction.

The kingdome of Sathan.

Theoph. We haue beene long enough in the exposition of the kingdome of God: let vs goe forward to the other member.

How the
kingdome of
God com-
meth.

member. What meaneth that word; Let it come, or let it approach?

Mat. The office of a good king standeth in two special things;

1. First, to rule his subiects (that is to say, such as are loyall and obedient) to keepe them in peace, defend, deale mercifully and louingly with them, and to redeeme them if they be taken captiues.

2. Secondly, to punish the rebels, and to destroy and throw downe the enemies of his kingdome. When therefore wee desire of God that his kingdome may come, wee doe as if we praied, that he would increase the number of beleeuers, enlarge his Church euery day, more and more heape vpon it his gifts, and settle it with right order: and contrariwise, that hee would cut off all the enemies of it, ouerthrow their counsels, destroy their purposes, and that the defending of the Church may be euery day increased, till at length it come to the highest perfection. Howbeit, that shall not bee before the day of iudgement: at which time all his enemies being overcome, hee shall make them his footstoole. And then (as the Apostle saith) he shall deliuer vp the kingdome to God the Father, that is, he shall raigne quietly without any rebellion and resistance, and wee shall liue peaceably in him, being deliuered from all feare and trouble of enemies.

1. Cor. 15. 24

The third Petition.

Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heauen.

Theoph. Let vs come to the third petition, being the last of them that respect the glory of God.

Mat. It is this; Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen. Wherein indeed we do not simply desire of God, that his will may be done, the fulfilling whereof there is verily nothing that can let: but that he will so guide vs with his spirit, that we may be ready to do his wil, reuealed vnto vs in his word, & that with no lesse desire than the heavenly Angels do. But concerning his secret will; we desire that if when it be done, any aduersities befall vs, namely losse of goods, hinderance, afflictions, whether they concerne the soule or the body, we may beare them all patiently as sent from

from his hand, and so obey his will, that ours may wholly and altogether giue place vnto it.

Theoph. Indeed he were happy, that after this manner should conforme himselfe to the will of God.

Mat. Yea surely, because he might worthily glory in this, that God did nothing but that which hee would, seeing that he would no other thing but that which were acceptable and pleasing to God. And assuredly there bee many things that call vs vnto that. For, if God our heavenly father be wiser than we (which all men do confesse) it is not to be doubted, but hee knoweth what wee haue neede of, better than our selues; and that therefore by good right, wee ought to preferre his holy and good will before our owne, which is wicked and corrupt; yea rather often like vnto children, wee know not what wee would haue. For many times we change our purposes, and soorthwith or a little after, we disallow that, which a little before we verie greatly allowed of. For this cause the Lord, without any respect of our will and intents, as a good father, sendeth those things, which he knoweth to be necessary, both for his owne glory, and for our profit and saluation: which indeed are to be receiued with a quiet and thankfull mind as from his hand, vnlesse wee meane to bee miserable for euer: which we shall neuer escape, so long as wee cleaue to our owne will.

Of Christian
Patience.

Theo. I haue long since laboured to performe this, but as yet I haue not attained it: but especially, I finde by experience, that the vse of this doctrine is most hard when any great trouble commeth, whether it be of body or minde.

Theo. It is not onely hard, but verily cannot be generally brought to practise, especially if respect bee had of our own flesh, which maruellously pleaseth it selfe in the owne will and affections, and seeketh for nothing else but delights and pleasures. For this cause, in this place Christ teacheth vs to desire it of his father: but *Iames* assureth, that we shall receiue it, so as wee aske it in faith; If any of you lacke wisdom, let him aske it of God, which giueth it liberally vnto all, and casteth no man in the teeth, and it shall bee giuen vnto him. But let him aske in faith, not doubting.

Iam. 1. 5.

Theoph.

The. In that place *Iames* speaketh of wisdom, but we speake of patience.

Mat. There is no doubt, but by the word wisdom, he vnderstandeth patience, whereunto hee had exhorted the faithfull in the former verse, in these words; Let patience haue the perfect worke, that you may bee perfect and entire, so as nothing be wanting.

But because wee cannot doe it of our selues, heere hee sheweth by what meanes wee haue it from God, when he saith; If any man lacke wisdom, let him ask it of God, which giueth it to all men liberally.

Theo. But what is the cause, that he calleth patience by the name of wisdom?

Mat. To the end wee might vnderstand, that a mans chiefe wisdom standeth heerein, that in his aduersities and troubles hee patiently submit himselfe to the will of God: but on the contrary side, that it is the extreamest foolishnesse and madnesse, if any dare resist and set himselfe against it. For what good doth hee by it? Can hee change the wil of God? No verily. Nay rather he maketh his owne case worse, as well with in inward griefe that tormenteth him, as also because hee pulleth the wrath of God vpon himselfe. For by our stubbornnesse he is compelled to lay more grievous punishments vpon vs. On the other side, by our patience hee is mooued vnto pitie, so as hee turneth our afflictions into kindnesse, and doing vs good, euen as good parents are wont, when they perceiue that their children be brought into good order by their corrections.

Theoph. I see it is a thing profitable and necessary: howbeit, I thinke that the meditation of the things which thou declaredst (when we spake of afflictions) doe make not a little for this purpose.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly. For in that place we deliuered many things which may worke exceeding great comfort in the hearts of the faithfull. Neuerthelesse, I will adde vnto them two other besides, as an ouerplus.

1. First, when wee be ouerladen with afflictions, the euils which wee suffer are not so much to bee considered, as those which wee haue deserued, and yet notwithstanding, be not laid vpon vs. Furthermore, wee must thinke
vpon

upon the good things which the Lord heapeth upon vs, on the other side: and so indeed we shall finde, that God dealeth most mercifully euen in the midst of our afflictions, if they be examined according to the greatnesse of our sinnes.

2 Secondly, that we are not to looke upon them onely, who in outward shew be a little happier than wee, and whom wee see to bee exempted from the troubles wherewith we are grieved; but upon infinite and innumerable others, which are in farre greater miseries, than are those that wee suffer, whose sinnes notwithstanding are not so great as ours.

Theop. I doe very much reioyce that I haue heard these two things: for I will daily make vse of them, as occasion shall serue.

Mat. Thou speakest wisely, when thou addest the word *daily*. For the Lord our master, that we should not forget this doctrine so profitable, is wont oftentimes to beate it into our heads, by sending of troubles, wherein we might practise it, and verily we ought to bee well acquainted with it, seeing we are so often exercised in it.

Theoph. But I for my part doe finde it true by daily experience, that I am very little exercised in it. Neuerthelesse I hope, that by the grace of God, I shall profit better in it than hetheretofore I haue done: especially, seeing now I know the way how I may doe it, namely to craue it of God by daily prayers, and continually to haue in minde the things which thou hast said. But now, forasmuch as I haue heard the meaning of this third petition, which is the last of those that concerne the glory of God, let vs goe forward to the rest. But before I come to the three following which concerne our owne good and saluation, I would haue thee to declare the order of these petitions, & withal, how fitlie they be ioyned together.

Mat. These former agree together most excellently, forasmuch as they be of the same kind. For, after that we are made partakers of the knowledge of God, by the which we are moued to enter into his kingdome, that is, into his Church, it is meet and conuenient, that wee should desire to be informed and taught the obedience of his will, whereunto

The coherence and summe of the three former petitions of the Lords prayer,

whereunto the ministry of the Church calleth vs daily.

Finally, in these three petitions, wee desire of God to giue men such knowledge of his Maiestie, as they may willingly submit themselues to his kingdome and rule, and from their hearts obey his pleasure; that so he may be glorified of them, and in them.

The fourth Petition;

Giue vs this day our daily bread.

The summe
of the last
three petiti-
ons.

Theoph. Wee are to come to the three last petitions of the Lords prayer, wherein we say those things were contained which concerne both our soule and body.

Mat. True: for the first of them comprehendeth the things that bee necessarie to the passing thorow or finishing of this life: but the other two, those that appertain to our saluation.

The. Recite therefore the first.

Mat. Giue vs this day our daily bread.

Theo. What is the meaning of it?

The exposition
of the
fourth petiti-
on.

Mat. To the end wee may serue God according to our calling; in this petition we desire of him, to giue vs our daily bread, that is, that euery day he should minister vnto vs those things that bee necessarie for this life: for all those bee comprehended vnder the name of bread, as being a thing most necessarie. Howbeit, this is to be noted, that (while we aske of God our dayly bread) we doe also desire such things as bee requisite and necessarie, that we may eate it in peace and quietnesse.

Therefore this petition generally containeth whatsoever can be desired for our peaceable, calme, vndistressed, and good estate in this world. Neuerthelesse, wee ought to depend and hang vpon the pleasure of our heavenly Father. For he will giue vs such things, as hee shall know to bee for the furtherance of his owne glorie, and our saluation. And heereupon it may be gathered, why he would haue vs to aske bread onely; namely, that wee might know, that bread ought to suffice vs, if the Lord shall see it good, to giue vs no other thing to nourish vs.

Theoph. There doe five principall points come into my minde,

minde, concerning this thy exposition of daily bread, whereof I will aske thee.

The first whereof is this, why wee pray to haue daily bread giuen vs? seeing we are cōmanded to prouide vs, by our honest labour, such things as bee necessary for this life.

Mat. Because our labour shall be to no purpose except the blessing of God be added vnto it; euen as the Psalmist expressely teacheth.

Theoph. Wherefore are wee commanded to craue that bread, which we call *our*?

Mat. The word *our* was added, for two causes. The first, that we might vnderstand, that that bread is promised of God; and therefore, by good right, called ours: and hereby we might be assured, that it cannot be denied vs. The other, to the end we might remember, that that bread is to be prouided by lawfull meanes and waies, and such as bee allowed of God; but not by theft or deceit. For otherwise wee eat not our owne bread, but another mans; received not from God, but from the Diuell.

Theo. The third point followeth: why are these words added; This day, and daily?

Mat. That we might altogether, and wholly depend vpon the prouidence of God, so as we should not be carefull for things to come, as if wee did distrust; but bee content with those that be necessary for our present need, with this hope, that the Lord will prouide for the morrow.

Theoph. I come to the fourth point: How well agreeth it, that they which haue plenty of things, and whose barns and store houses be full, should aske their daily bread?

Mat. Because we must hold it for a certainty and truth, that bread of it selfe cannot nourish, except the blessing of God be added. For sometimes rich men are seene worne and pined away with leanness: for this cause Moses saith; Man liueth not by bread onely, but by euery word that commeth out of the mouth of God. In which words, the prophet doth also signify this, that the power of God doth not so cleaue vnto bread, that hee cannot nourish vs without it, as oft as shall please him. Whereof he gaue the Israelites a singular prooffe, whom hee fed in the wilderness by the space of forty yeeres, without bread.

Theoph. The last point is behinde. Why doth Christ command vs to pray for bread in common, in these words: Giue vs our bread; rather than priuately, after this maner; Giue me my bread?

Mat. To the end wee might know, that we are to pray for it, not for our selues alone, but also for our neighbors, of whose profit and commoditie, Christian charity requirereth, that we should be no lesse carefull than of our owne. Moreouer, by this manner of praying, wee are more and more assured, that wee shall obtaine the bread which wee pray for; forasmuch as the whole Church doth not only craue it with vs, but also for vs: euen as we also doe craue the same both with it and for it. For we are all the sonnes of one and the same Father, euen as wee are taught in the beginning of this praier, while we say in common; Our Father. For the same cause also, the two petitions following bee deliuered in the same forme of words: namely, Forgiue vs our trespasses, and leade vs not into tentation: And they containe all the things that appertaine to the heauenly life, euen as this containeth those which be necessary for this present life.

Theoph. Wherefore are the things that concerne our saluation, contained in two petitions?

Mat. Because our saluation standeth vpon two parts: The first, that we be reconciled vnto God; and this wee desire in the first petition, which intreateth of the forgiveness of our finnes. The other, that being reconciled vnto him by the forgiveness of sins, wee be kept in his loue and obedience, so as wee obey him, being mindfull of that infinite benefit which he hath bestowed vpon vs.

The first petition.

Forgiue vs our trespasses, as we forgiue them that trespass against vs.

Theoph. The two last petitions doe remaine to be considered of vs. Let vs therefore come to the first.

What is the meaning of it?

Mat. Because wee bee all miserable sinners, by reason whereof the Lord is iustly angry with vs, yea rather is so long angry, as our finnes shall be imputed and laid to our charge

charge before him ; in this petition wee pray, that for his infinite mercies sake hee will forgiue them all ; to the end that for the time to come he may fauour vs, being at one with vs, namely by the forgiuenesse of our sinnes.

Theoph. But why doe we craue of God to forgiue vs our sinnes, for the which Christ hath most fully satisfied : seeing there is no place for forgiuenesse, where satisfaction is made ?

Mat. If the satisfaction were of our selues, this were indeed true : but seeing it is by Christ, which is freely giuen vs of his father, forgiuenes agreeth necessarily with it. And verily it is as a man condemned in some summe of money were to be cast into prison, vntill hee had paid the whole summe, and yet were not able to do it. Whom if the prince ment to pleasure without any hinderance of the Law, and should freely giue him that wherein he was to haue beene fined, should he not haue done as much, as if he had forgiuen the offence ? He should indeed. And this similitude is most fit: Forasmuch as in this petition our sinnes be called debts, to the end we might vnderstand, that by them wee are no lesse debtors vnto God, than if a man were in great debt vnto an other, and yet had not wherewith to pay any thing at all. With this similitude agreeth also that, that is written of *Paul* ; Putting out the hand writing that was against vs, which was contrary vnto vs, he euen tooke it away, and fastned it vpon the crosse. In which words he teacheth, that Christ hath most fully satisfied for our sinnes,

Col. 2. 14.

Theo. The more diligently I consider the mystery of our redemption, so much the more cometh to my remembrance the infinite marvellous wisdom of God, which by a way altogether wonderful, hath knit or ioyned together his perfect iustice with his perfect mercy, and that aswell to his owne glorie, as to our saluation and benefit.

Mat. True indeed. But if thou do with a little more diligence marke that way, thou shalt find three things which the reason of man could neuer haue deuised, & which out of Christ are found no where else, for the auoiding of the punishment due for our sinnes : and they be these : That we should our selues pay our debts vnto God : or else seeke another, which is both able to pay them, and doe also ac-

quit vs of them : or that God himfelfe should forgie vs whatfoeuer we be indebted vnto him.

Theoph. I would haue you declare these things a little more largely.

Mat. First therefore I will shew, that these three cannot any where be found, sauing in Christ. And verily whatsoeuer men can imagine, they shall neuer find in themselves wherewith to satisfie God. Who also (as the Apostle saith) hath shut all vnder sinne, that he might haue mercie vpon all.

Neither shall they finde any creature in heauen or in earth sufficient to doe this office. But if they fly vnto God his mercy, to obtaine forgiveness of their sins, his perfect iustice will be a let, which requireth to be fully satisfied.

Theo. Let vs now see, how God hath ioined these three things together in Christ, to reconcile his exceeding great mercy with his most perfect righteousness, vnto our saluation.

Mat. Being made one with Christ by faith, and therefore also partakers of that which is his, wee our selues pay all our debts vnto God, & that out of the riches of Christ; which are truly made ours. And by this meanes the perfect iustice of God is fully satisfied, which indeede requireth this, that he which oweth the debt should pay it. Neuertheless another hath paid it for vs, namely Christ, who alone hath drunke of the cuppe of his wrath, and (as the Apostle saith) hath borne our sinnes in his body vpon the tree. And therein most manifestly appeareth the great mercy of God, that gaue his most deerey beloued son for vs his enemies vnto a most shamefull death.

Finally, because hee that hath satisfied the heauenly Father for vs, is his dearely beloued sonne, and euerlasting God with the Father, freely giuen vnto vs; the continuall forgiveness of sinnes (as hath beene said) is ioined with his satisfaction, and that doth especially make stedfast and sure his immeasurable mercie.

Theoph. Verily a notable discourse, and very full of comfort. Let vs now returne to the exposition of our petition: Why is this clause added in the end; As wee forgie them that trespasse against vs?

Mat.

Mat. That is, according to the promise made vs of the forgiuenesse of our finnes, vpon this condition, that wee forgiue them that hurt vs. And Christ would haue it expressly mentioned, because hee knew how hardly wee forgiue others their trespasses. Therefore in this clause he calleth vs to remember that wee shall not obtaine forgiuenesse of our finnes at the hands of God, except we also forgiue our neighbors their offences. Hereupon is that threatning of God by the Prophet against the Israelites; When you shall stretch out your hands, I wil hide mine eyes from you, although you make many praieres I wil not heare you; for your hands are full of bloud.

Esa. 1.15.

Theoph. Therefore this manner of speech doth not note an equality; as if God forgauē vs so much only as we shall forgiue.

Mat. No not so. For, our forgiuenesse, euen as we our selues be imperfect, is alwaies imperfect, and sauoureth of the vncleannesse of our flesh: whereupon it commeth to passe, that euen in them that are most regenerated, notwithstanding they doe vnfeignedly forgiue as God requireth, & desire no reuenge, yea rather be ready to doe good vnto such as haue hurt them, and doe daily pray for them: yet there remaineth some bitterness, so as we doe not embrace them with that affection of heart, which we would haue embraced them with, if wee had alwaies beene well pleased with them: which if God should doe, wee were in very ill case.

Therefore this is the meaning of this petition; O Lord according to thy promise forgiue vs our finnes tully and perfectly, as a most perfect God: seeing that we being most imperfect men, according to thy commandement haue forgiuen them that haue hurt vs.

Theoph. In what place are this commandement and promise?

Mat. They be presently added by Christ after this praier in these words; If you forgiue men their offences, your heauenly Father will also forgiue you: But if you shall not forgiue men their offences, neither wil your father forgiue you your offences.

Mat. 6.14.

Theoph. I grant it is very right, that we should doe those

things to our neighbours, which wee desire to be done to our selues; and so that God doth most worthily deny them forgiveness, that will not forgive their neighbours.

Mat. 18. 23

Mat. True : especially seeing our sinnes against God, whereof we craue pardon, are farre more grievous, and farre more in number than are they which our neighbours can euer commit against vs. And this doth Christ plainly teach in an excellent parable, when hee saith : The kingdome of heaven is like vnto a king, which would demand an account of his seruants : and when he began to reckon, there was one brought vnto him which ought ten thousand talents. And when he was not able to pay it, his Lord commanded him to bee sold, and his wife and children, and all that he had, and the debt to be paid. The seruant therefore fell downe and besought him, saying ; Master, appease thine anger toward mee, and I will pay thee all. Then that seruants Master had compassion vpon him, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt : but when the seruant was departed, he found one of his fellows that ought him an hundred pence, and hee laid hands vpon him, and tooke him by the throat, saying : Pay mee that thou owest. Then his fellow fell downe at his feet, and besought him, saying, Appease thine anger toward mee, and I will pay thee all : yet he would not, but went and cast him into prison, till hee should pay the debt. And when his other fellows saw what was done, they were very sory, and came and declared vnto their Master all that was done. Then his Master called him, & said vnto him : O euill seruant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou praiedst me : oughtest thou not also to haue had pity vpon thy fellow, euen as I had pitie on thee ? So his Master was wroth, and deliuered him vnto the Jailers, till hee should pay all that was due vnto him. So likewise (saith Christ) shall mine heavenly Father do vnto you, except ye forgive from your hearts each one to his brother their trespasses.

The sixth Petition.

And leade vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill.

Theoph. The last petition is behinde:

Mat.

Mat. Hauing obtained forgiuenesse of sins, we desire of the Lord to be present with vs, that we fall not againe into them, when we say, Lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill. For, this we pray, that he will not giue vs ouer vnto the power of the diuell, to bee overcome of him in temptation as we haue deserued. but contrariwise, that he would strengthen vs against the assaults and deadly subtilties of so great an enemy, that so daily more and more we may endeavour to amend our liues and obey him.

Theoph. When therefore God leadeth men into temptation, doth he not stirre them vp to euill?

Mat. Not so. For that is altogether vnworthy of his Maiestie, and is contrary to his diuine nature.

For this cause *James* saith; Let no man when he is tempted, say he is tempted of God. For God cannot be tempted with euill, neither doth he tempt any man. But euery one is tempted, while he is drawen aside and snared of his owne concupiscence.

Therefore as God in mercy defendeth the faithfull, and suffreth them not to be deceiued or mastered of the diuell, so as to bee overcome of sinne: so on the contrary side, such as he meaneth to punish, he deliuereth ouer to the diuell as to a tormentor, to be overcome and vanquished of him in temptation. In which sense the Apostle saith, that they which glorifie not God, are giuen vp to the lusts of their owne hearts. Which neuerthelesse he doth without any allowance of sinne, as hath beene said in this place.

Theo. So far as I see, God punisheth sinnes with sinnes.

Mat. Yea verily: but by a way diuers from that whereof I spake, when wee entreated of afflictions: in which place we said, that God sometimes stirreth vp one, who committeth that sinne against vs, which we our selues had committed against another: an example whereof wee haue in *Dauid*. He had defiled the wife of *Uriah*: the Lord raised vp his son *Absolon*, to defile his fathers concubines. But of all the temptations which are sent of God, that is the most grievous, when God deliuereth men vp to the diuell to be overcome of him in temptation. For then he giueth them ouer into a reprobate sense, that when they haue heaped sinnes vpon sinnes, they may at length run headlong into

The exposition
of the last
petition.

1am. I. 13.

Rom. I. 24.

eternall destruction, except the Lord (which sometimes he doth) by his mighty hand stay the course of that downfall.

Theo. What meaneth the conclusion added to this praier? For thine is the kingdome, the power and glory, for euer and euer. Amen.

The exposition
of the con-
clusion.

Mat. It containeth the cause for which wee craue all the former things, namely, for that they concerne his kingdome, power, and glory. For, by the first three, his kingdome is made manifest: and by the last three his power is exercised; whereupon followeth the increase of his glory. Therefore this conclusion is added, that we may with more boldnes come vnto God, and craue of him the things we haue spoken of, who onely is able to giue them to vs: and that with greater assurance we might beleue that we shall obtaine them; forasmuch as while he bestoweth them vpon vs, hee declareth himselfe to bee a most mighty king, whereupon ensueth his owne glorifying.

Faith.

Theo. I cannot sufficiently maruell at this abridgement or breuiarie of praier, also the two former, namely of faith and the Law; seeing that in so few words, and in so exact order, they containe such hard things, and so excellent doctrine.

The Law.

Praier.

Mat. Thou doest indeede not without cause maruell at them. For in them shineth the wonderfull wisdom of God, and they doe very well agree together among themselves, in that order wherein wee haue propounded them. For faith teacheth vs all things that are to bee beleued vnto our salvation: and I set it in the first place, as it were the foundation of the rest. But the Law, concerning all things that bee required to the yeelding of obedience vnto God, followeth in most excellent order, as the fruit and witnesse of faith. Finally in the last place commeth praier, because of our selues we can neither beleue, nor do any thing that is pleasing vnto God; by the which we be taught, by what meanes we may obtaine both at his hands. And in these is contained the summe of all Christian doctrine.

Theoph. Before I go to any other thing, I will propound two questions concerning the doctrine of praier.

1. First, praier seemeth to be vnprofitable, seeing wee can by it obtain nothing at the hands of God, besides that
which

which hee hath already determined in his vnchangeable prouidence to giue vs: neither doth he cease to giue it, although we pray not.

2. Secondly, it seemeth superfluous, that wee should pray vnto God, to shew him what things wee haue neede of, forasmuch as he knoweth them better than our selues. Now it is thy part to answer to the former, which concerneth the prouidence of God.

Mat. They bee much deceiued who for this cause abstaine from praier. For the prouidence of God taketh not away second causes, such as praier is; yea rather it doth stablish and strengthen them: for God vseth them as instruments for the performance of that which hee had appointed before. But I remember a story, which if I be not deceiued, will bring light vnto this question. A certaine Noble man well furnished with horses and armour, went to war; and it fell out that hee tooke his journey by the house of a very faithfull Pastour of the Church knowen to him long before. This man very earnestly admonished him to bee diligent in praier, by the which he might moue the Lord to prosper his enterprises. He straightway reasoneth concerning the prouidence of God, as if hee should haue said, that God had already determined of all things that should come to passe: and therefore that his decree could not bee changed by his praiers. That good Minister answered, I would therefore aduise thee to send away thy horses and thy armour, as things vnprofitable, forasmuch as the issue of warre dependeth vpon the prouidence of God, so as no other thing can come to passe, besides that which hee hath determined. The souldier answered, that such as went to warre could not without rashnesse lay aside their armour, because they were instruments by the which God is wont to giue the victory to such as it seemed good vnto him. The same also might I say of praier (saith the Minister) by the which the Lord vseth to giue vs the things that be necessary, as well for the vse of this life, as for euerlasting saluation; and therefore that it was no lesse rashnesse, to neglect it vnder the pretence of Gods prouidence, especially seeing it is in so many places commended of God, with innumerable promises made vnto them that

Whether the prouidence of God should keepe vs frō praier.

that doe often exercise themselves in it: and the Sonne of God himselfe hath giuen vs an example thereof, who also doth command that wee should pray without ceasing. By the which answer that Noble man was not a little edified.

Rom. 15. 30.

Theo. I may confesse the same of my selfe. Furthermore I doe acknowledge, that hitherto I did neuer know the answer to this question so cleerely, as I haue vnderstood it by this comparison of armor, which indeed I thinke most fit to bring light vnto this doubt. And verily in the meane time it doth not a little agree vnto praier. For praier is vnto vs in stead of spirituall weapons, by the which wee may fight against & overcome our spirituall enemies, the diuell, the flesh, and sin. Hitherto is referred the saying of *Paul*, I beseech you brethren, for our Lord Iesus Christs sake, and the loue of the Spirit, that yee would strue with me by your praiers to God for me. Moreouer, this reason ought to take place in all the affaires of men: the euent and issue whereof, notwithstanding it depend and hang vpon Gods prouidence, yet are not meanes to bee neglected, which the Lord ministreth vnto vs to doethem by: otherwise God is tempted and despised.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other question: what neede wee to craue of God by praier, things necessarie, seeing that he knoweth them farre better than we our selues?

Mat. Although hee doe, yet his will is that wee should obtaine them by daily praiers.

That it is necessary to pray to God, although he know better than our selues, what is expedient for vs.

1. First, that wee may be kept in some feare and reuerence by this outward adoration & worship, by the which also hee meaneth to exercise vs continually in thankfulness, that wee may so much the more acknowledge him to be the fountaine of all good things.

2. Secondly, he doth so much the more shew his loue towards vs, when hee doth so farre abase himselfe, that he vouchsafeth to heare our complaints one after another seuerally, that hee may provide for them, so much as hee shall know to be conuenient. And by this meanes hee enflameth vs to the loue of himselfe, and causeth vs to put all our hope and confidence in him.

3. Thirdly, by that familiar communing or talking with him, he meaneth to make vs well acquainted with his excellent

cellent Maieſty, that we may bee bold to flie to him the more freely in all our neceſſities, as vnto our moſt mercifull Father.

4. Laſt of all, he doth this, that we may more and more confeſſe, that whatſoeuer good thing we haue, commeth from him alone, that we ſhould giue him thanks, and vſe it to his glory. For if hee giue vs good things vnasked, wee ſhould eaſily beleue either that they were from our ſelues, or elſe that they came to vs by chance.

Theoph. While thou ſhewſt me the cauſe why the Lord would haue vs to obtaine by prayer y^e things that hee hath determined to giue vs, thou haſt with the ſame labour declared the excellencie & worthineſſe of it. For I perceiue, that by it, almoſt y^e whole firſt table of the Law is fulfilled.

Mat. Thou iudgeſt right. For by it, God is acknowledged with the minde, worſhipped with the bodie, and ſanctified and hallowed with the mouth.

Therefore alſo hee requireth prayer of vs, as his ſpeciall worſhip: and among all the good things that he beſtoweth vpon vs, it is the greateſt, forasmuch as by it we may haue acceſſe to his Maieſty, ſo often as we pleaſe. For, that good heauenly Father ſuffereth vs comming to him familiarly, and laying open our wants to him, euen as wee might doe with ſome familiar friend of ours. Moreouer, as the lawfull vſe of prayer is very acceptable to God, and moſt profitable for our ſelues; ſo on the contrary ſide, there is nothing more diſpleaſing vnto God, and that doth more prouoke his wrath, than the abuſe of it.

Theoph. What is that abuſe?

Mat. It may be referred to ſix heads.

1. Firſt, when wee make our prayers to any others, or vnto himſelfe in any other name, but in the name of Chriſt: and in this Idolaters doe offend, that flie to Angels, or to the Saints receiued into heauen.

2. Secondly, when the power of God is tied to ſome certaine prayers: which ſuperſtitious perſons doe, that number their prayers, who alſo haue certaine ſet formes of prayer, which they thinke vnlawfull to exceed.

3. Thirdly, when God is praied to, onely with the mouth, the heart in the meane time being very farre off:

by

What corruption Satan hath brought into prayer.

by the which sinne, the Maiestie of God is indeede shamefully despised. But therein they are especially deceined, that pray in a strange tongue which they vnderstand not. For it is impossible that our minde should attend vpon the things we vnderstand not.

4. Fourthly, when any praieth vnto God with a vaine opinion of his owne righteousness, so as hee bee no whit touched with the true sense and feeling of his owne miserie. And therein hypocrites, and iustitiaries, do offend, of which number that proud Pharisee was, who in praying, gaue thanks to God that he was not like to other men.

5. Fifthly, when any impenitent person, that indeuou-
reth not to amend his life, praieth : and this is the most common fault of praier, and vsuall also with them, which otherwise bragge of the profession of the Gospell. Who notwithstanding they auoid the foure former faults, yet are not free from this prophaning of the name of God, but doe most of all fall into the contempt of it.

Theoph. How ?

Mat. Dost thou aske ? Is not this to contemne his Ma-
iesty, when they pray to God that his name may bee hal-
lowed; which they doe defile through their blasphemies
and cursed oathes ?

That his kingdome may come: when they make a scorn
of the ministerie of the Church ?

That his wil may be done, which they doe euery day see
themselues against ? and which more is, be in a great fume,
if any thing fall out contrary to their owne will ?

Craue daily bread, which they get by vnlawfull means ?

That hee will forgiue them their sinnes, as they forgiue
their neighbours ; and in the meane time pursue them
with deadly hatred that haue done them wrong, and
worke them all euils and mischief ?

That he will not leade them into temptation; but in the
meane while purposely seeke vanities and allurements of
the world, whereinto they may be led ?

Theoph. But it may bee obiected, that none but meere
profane persons, doe the things that be against this praier.

Mat. I grant. But if a man doe against it in one only
point, hee doth no lesse mocke God ; for that cannot spring
from

from any where else, saue from the contempt of his most holy Maiesty, so as he doe it wittingly, and willingly.

Therefore *James* saith; Whosoever keepeth the whole Law, & yet faileth in one point, is guilty of all. For euen as if one of the vitall parts, wherein the life is in a mans bodie, be hurt, it bringeth death vnto a man, although all the other be well: so fallerth hee into destruction, that applieth himselfe to some good works, and abstaineth from many sins, neuertheless in the meane time continue in some one sinne, and flattereth himselfe in it, and repenteth not. *Iam. 2. 10.*

Theo. But thou vnderstandest not this, of the sins which we often times commit, through the infirmity of our flesh.

Mat. These things bee vnderstood, neither of other, nor of these sins; so as there be repentance and a desire to amend: for then God of his mercy doth pardon and forgive them, all in Christ Iesus.

Theoph. The sixt and last fault in praier is behinde.

Mat. When a man praieith without faith, that is, without assurance of being heard: and it is as it were the effect, and that which hangeth vpon the former five. Neuertheless, this is a most grievous sinne: for that distrust must needs arise from this, that we beleue that God either cannot, or will not performe the thing wee pray for; or else that hee heareth not our praiers: which verily cannot come into the minde of any man, but hee denieth either his power, or his goodnesse, or his Godhead.

For this cause *James* saith, that euery one should pray with faith and wauer not: for hee that wauereth, is like a waue of the sea, tost of the winde, and carried away; neither let that man thinke, that hee shall obtaine any thing of God. Christ also saith; Whatsoever you shall aske in praier, if you beleue, you shall receiue it. *Iam. 1. 6.*

Theoph. But why doest thou call this fault the effect of the former?

Mat. Because faith cannot stand with idolatry, nor with superstition, nor with prophanenes, nor with hypocrisie, but especially, if there be an euill conscience: for euen the faithfull themselues finde it true by experience in themselves, that they cannot assure themselves that God is mercifull to them to heare their praiers, if through infirmities they *Mat. 21. 22.*

they fall into any sin, till they be reconciled to him by true repentance. Therefore faith is as it were the soule of true praier : for it comprehendeth all the conditions of it. Moreouer, as by it God is glorified, so also it is alwaies heard of him. But contrariwise, as the fained is despised, so he not onely neuer heareth it, but doth also contemne it, and most grievously reuengeth the makers of it, as those of whom his most holy name is prophaned.

Theoph. This morning thy discourse of good workes did not a little delight mee : but this our disputation of praier hath very greatly edified and comforted mee. And by it in summe I haue learned these things ;

1. How wee ought to pray : namely, that our praiers be directed vnto God from the heart : but yet so, that wee bee touched with the right feeling of our owne pouertie and miserie, and with true repentance of our sinnes.

2 Secondly, what is to be asked at the hands of God, namely the things that concerne his glory, and our owne saluation and profit.

3. Finally, by what meanes we shall obtaine them: euen if they bee asked of vs with faith in the name of our Lord Iesus Christ. But I beseech God our heavenly Father, that the praiers that shall bee made of vs, may be free from all those euill conditions which thou hast reckoned vp : that hee himselfe may be so much the more glorified by them, and wee daily haue experience of the effect of them : so as

He may comfort vs in our aduersities,
 Helpe our necessities,
 Succour our infirmities,
 Bring helpe to our weaknesse,
 And strengthen vs in his loue and feare,
 And finally, confirme vs in the hope of euerlasting life,
 through Iesus Christ his Sonne our most beloued Lord.

Mat. So be it.

Now at length, wee haue declared the chiefe points of Christian Religion : and I hope by the grace of God, that they which are behinde shall bee handled to morrow. In the meane time, God giue you good night.

Theoph. And you also.

The end of the second Booke.

THE THIRD BOOKE OF *Christian Religion:*

Intreating of the outward meanes,
by the which God bringeth vs
to saluation.

CHAP. I.

Of the ministerie of the word : by the which the holy Ghost begetteth faith in our hearts, keepeth and increaseth it.

THEOPHILVS.

God saue you most dearely beloued and reuerend brother.

Mat. God saue you also most louing *Theophilus*.

Theoph. Shall it not be troublesome to thee for vs to returne to the disputation which wee brake off, and to assay to bring it to an end?

Mat. Nay rather (*Theophilus*) it shall bee a most pleasant thing vnto me. Neuerthelesse, before we come to the matter, I pray God, that as hitherto hee hath beene with vs, he will also be with vs heereafter to the end.

Theoph. So be it. I will in few words repeat our former discourse, that the things which haue beene handled already, may be ioined with those that follow.

1. First, hitherto haue been handled the chiefe grounds of our saluation, namely, the perfect iustice of God, and the deadly sicknesse of mans sinne.

2. Secondly, the most perfect remedy of it, euen Iesus Christ.

3. Furthermore, the applying of this remedie vnto vs by faith, by the which we recouer spirituall health, that is, wee are iustified before God, and there-through made partakers of eternall life.

4. And last of all, faith, which is wrought in our hearts by the holy Ghost that regenerateth vs, together with repentance, from whence good workes doe flow: which indeede bee testimonies of our faith; but especially praier. Therefore this one thing remaineth, that wee vnderstand

by

A briefe rehearfall of the former bookes.

The summe of the third booke.

202 *Concerning the ministerie of the word.*

by what means y^e holy Ghost doth regenerate or renew vs.

1. Pet. I.

Mat. Peter affirmeth, that we are begotten againe, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of the living God. And therefore we doe by good right say, That by it the holy Ghost begetteth in vs both faith and repentance.

Theoph. When hath the word of God that force?

Rom. 10. 13

Mat. When it is preached of such as haue a lawfull calling thereto. For *Paul* saith, How shall they belecue in him of whom they haue not heard? How therefore without preaching? but how shall they preach except they be sent? Out of which words he draweth this conclusion; Therefore faith is by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Rom. 10. 17.

Theoph. There be therefore diuers degrees or steps of our saluation. For it is plaine by that which hath beene said, that we cannot obtaine it,

1. Vnlesse we be reconciled to God.
2. But wee cannot bee reconciled to God, without Christ.
3. Christ without faith we can neuer haue. Loe heere three degrees, and now thou addest the fourth;
4. That wee cannot haue faith without the preaching of the word.

Of the word
preached and
receiued by
faith.

1. Cor. I. 12.

Mat. So it is. Whosoever therefore despise the preaching of the word of God (which is in respect of vs the first step of our saluation) do despise & contemn their own saluation. For the Apostle saith; After that the world in the wisdom of God knew not God by his wisdom (that is, by the frame and workmanship of this world, by the which God maketh manifest his exceeding power & wisdom) it pleased God by foolish preaching to saue beleeuers.

Theoph. Why calleth he preaching foolish, which in the former verse he had so highly extolled?

Mat. Hee doth that according to the opinion of men, of whom for the most part it is despised, no otherwise than if it were foolishnesse: notwithstanding hee teacheth, that with God it is the greatest wisdom vnto those of whom it is receiued and entertained with due reuerence. Which Christ confirmeth, when he saith; The kingdome of heauen is like a treasure hidden in the field, which when a man found

found hee hid it, and for ioy of it, hee goeth away, and selleth all he hath, and buieth that field.

Theoph. But in those parables, Christ intreateth not of the preaching of the word, but of the kingdom of heauen, which indeed he saith is like vnto sundry things.

Mat. It is not to be doubted, but that by the name of the kingdome of heauen, he doth vnderstand the preaching of the word: and this is easily gathered euen out of the former parables, wherein he speaketh of the seed; for in them by the interpretation of Christ himselfe, the preaching of the word is meant.

Theo. Why is the preaching of the word called of Christ by the name of the kingdome of heauen?

Mat. To the end he might shew, that it is as it were a key, by the which the gate of the kingdome of heauen is opened vnto vs. Which thing in another place he confirmeth, when he calleth the ministry of the word, the keies of the kingdome of heauen.

Mat. 16. 19.

Theoph. Now I desire to heare of thee what Christ meaneth by those parables of the treasure hidden in the field, and of that precious pearle, for the purchasing whereof, he counselleth vs to sell all we haue.

Mat. This is his mind; That the ministry of the word farre excelleth all earthly riches, and that therefore it is to bee preferred before all our goods: yea rather that they ought all to be forsaken, than to suffer our selues to be de- priued of it.

But in hearing the word, wee must diligently take heed of two extremities, whereinto Sathan labourerh all hee can to bring vs, that so he may take from vs the fruit which wee are to reape of the preaching of the word. The one is the contempt of him which preacheth the word. The other, when we attribute or giue vnto him more than is right.

A most profitable admonition to such as heare the preaching of the word.

Theoph. What discommoditie haue we by the former of the two extremities?

Mat. That wee haue no fruit of his preaching, whose person we despise. For the contempt of the doctrine doth necessarily follow the contempt of his person. For this cause *Paul*, meaning to commend Pastors in respect of the excellency

Isa. 52. 7.

Rom. 10. 25.

excellency of their office, applieth vnto them this saying of *Esay*; how beautifull are the feete of them that preach peace, and bring tidings of good things!

Theoph. What discommodity ariseth of the other extremitie?

Mat. When too much is ascribed to the person of him which preacheth the word, it followeth, that the force of preaching is attributed vnto his person. And therefore when that is yeelded to men that is due vnto God, men spoile themselves of the fruit of the Ministry. And this is that wherein in former times the Corinthians offended, when one said, I am *Pauls*; I am *Apollos*; I am of *Cephass*; and I am *Christs*: which mischiefe, that the apostle might remedy, he beateth downe the persons of the Ministers in these words; Who then is *Paul*, and who is *Apollos*, but the ministers by whom you haue beleueed? I haue planted, *Apollos* hath watered, but God hath giuen the increase. Therefore, saith he, neither is he that planteth, any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giueth the increase. For this cause the same Apostle saith; God hath put the treasure of preaching in earthen vessels, that the excellency of that power might be of God, and not of vs. That is to say, God for the most part sendeth ministers of abiect and base condition, that their excellency should not darken the power which he sheweth forth by their ministry.

1. Cor. 1. 12.

1. Cor. 3. 5.

1. Cor. 4. 7.

Theoph. Now I see the inconueniences wherunto those two extremities do carry vs. Which that we may auoide, the meane must be held and kept, namely, that we honour the Ministers for their office committed vnto them, and their preaching, in respect of God, whose power is manifested by it.

Mat. Thou iudgeth rightly. For we must doe as if a king should send vs some gift by the meanest of his seruants. For we would entertaine him honorably, in consideration of the gift brought by him: but the gift it selfe we would receiue for the kings sake, that sent it.

Theoph. Let vs go forward. I desire that thou wouldest shew, what is the vse of preaching, after that the holy ghost by it hath wrought in vs faith and repentance.

Mat. That both may be preserued in vs, yea rather increased

creased. For as a young child after he is borne, standeth in need of nourishment, that life may both be preserved and increased: so hee that is begotten anew by the seede of the Word of God, must be fed by the same, that hee may get strength, and spirituall increase, till, saith the Apostle, we come to a perfect man, and to the measure of the age of the fulnesse of Christ; that is, till we come to perfection it selfe, whereto indeed we shall neuer come, so long as wee liue in this world.

Theoph. Is not the reading of the word of God sufficient for these things, although there be no preaching?

Mat. No not so: euen as the vse of meats is not sufficient to the nourishment of mans bodie, except they bee dressed and prepared. For which cause verily, God when hee would threaten an extreme punishment to his people, saith; Behold the daies come that I will send a famine into the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst of water, but of hearing the word of God.

By the which words he meaneth, that we cannot be spiritually fed, without preaching. Yet neuertheless the often reading of the word of God, bringeth no little helpe to the preaching of it. For otherwise it should neuer haue beene so diligently commended of God.

Whereby it appeareth, that the holy Ghost, after it hath by the vncorrupt seed of the word of God, wrought in vs faith and repentance, confirmeth, and as it were nourisheth them, both by the preaching and reading of the same word, and by the vse of the Sacraments, ordained of God for the ratifying and sealing of it.

Theoph. Wee will therefore speake of the Sacraments when wee shall haue handled two questions appertaining to the preaching of the word.

1. The first is, concerning the calling of the Pastors, to whom this preaching is committed.

2. The other is, of the word that they are to preach. I will therefore begin with the first. For what cause saidst thou, that the pastors ought to be lawfully called to preach that word?

Mat. The cause is most euident. For euen as in a kingdom well ordered, there is no man which ought or may exercise

What the vse of preaching is, after wee haue faith & repentance.
Ephes. 4. 16.

Amos 8. 11.

Of the calling of the Ministers of the word.

exercise any publike office but by the commandement of the King : so none ought or can be accounted a true Pastor in the Church of God to preach his word, except hee be by him called with a lawfull calling. For how can wee beleue, that God ratifieth that which a mortall man doth with vs, vnlesse it be first certainly knowen that hee hath his commission from him ?

Theoph. What is that lawfull vocation or calling ?

Mat. It is two-fold.

The one extraordinary,
The other ordinary.

Theoph. What is that extraordinary calling ?

Mat. When any is called immediately of God : such as was the calling of the Apostles.

Theoph. What is the meaning of the word Apostle ?

Mat. It is a Greeke word, which signifieth sent, and they were called by that name, to declare their office : namely because they were sent of God by Christ, to preach the Gospell thorowout the whole world. Therefore Christ said vnto them ; As my Father sent mee, so doe I send you.

Theoph. Why callest thou that calling extraordinary ?

Mat. Because God vseth it extraordinarily, and that onely for a time, namely when the Churches are not yet settled and established : as in the time of Christ, when the Gospell was knowen scarce to any mortall man.

Theo. This therefore thou meanest ; After the Churches be planted and settled, that the ordinary calling should succede the extraordinary, to the end it may haue place in them.

Mat. Yea verily.

Theoph. Let vs now therefore intreat of that ordinarie calling ; and first shew what it is.

Mat. It is two-fold :

1. Inward, and 2. Outward.

Theo. What is the inward calling ?

Mat. That holy desire which any hath in the ministerie of the Church, to serue the glory of God, wherewith he is moued to prepare himselfe to the faithfull execution of that office, when he shal be called thereunto with the outward calling.

Theoph.

Vocation of
ministers two
fold.

Ioh. 20. 21.
Extraordina-
rie calling.

Ordinarie
calling.

Theoph. What is that outward calling?

Mat. The lawfull choice of a visible Church met together in the name of Christ. For hee hath promised, if but two or three be gathered together in his name, to be present in the midst of them. After this maner were the Pastors of the primitive Church called to the ministerie: and this is the true doore of Christs sheepfold, whereof mention is made in *Iohn* in these words: Verily, verily I say vnto you, he that entreth not in by the doore into the fold of the sheepe, but climeth vp another way, is a theefe & a robber.

Iohn 10.1.

Theoph. How many things be required, that the choice of the Church may be lawfull?

Mat. Three: first, that there be a search and triall both of the conuersation, and also of the learning of him that is to be chosen. And this indeede is necessarily required in a minister, as *Paul* expressly warneth; A Bishop must be faultlesse as Gods Steward: not frowardly pleasing himselfe, not angry, nor giuen to wine, no striker, nor couetous of filthy gaine, but giuen to hospitalitie, a louer of those that are good, temperat, iust, holy, sober, holding fast that faithfull word which serueth to doctrine, that he may also be able to exhort with holosome doctrine, and to conuince the gaine-saiers.

Three things
required in
the lawfull
calling of a
Minister.
Tit. 1.7.

Theoph. Is the office of a Bishop the same with the office of a Pastor?

Mat. Yea altogether. For when *Paul* calleth them by that name, they be put in remembrance of their dutie, as also by other names, by the which they bee called euerie where in the Scriptures, as Ministers, Shepherds, Elders.

Theoph. Let vs therefore weigh the signification, and reason of these names.

Mat. First of all, the name of Bishop, which signifieth an espiall, or one that watcheth, admonisheth them that are called to the Ministry of the Church, to watch, and to haue their eies alwaies set vpon the flocke committed to their charge, that it be not corrupted either with ill manners, or with false doctrine.

Bishop,

Secondly, they are called Ministers or seruants of Iesus Christ, that they may vnderstand, that they serue not men, but God, and therefore ought with the more diligence to

Ministers,

Shepherds.

apply themselves to the execution of their function.

Thirdly, they bee called Pastours or Shepherds, to put them in remembrance that the flocke of Christ is continually to be fed with the word of God, & to be looked vnto, that the diuell, which is a rauening wolfe, enter not into it.

Elders.

Finally, they be called Seniors, Elders, or Ancients, to declare the grauitie of manners, wherewith it is fit they should be beautified, so as they may be free from all lightnesse and vanity, which for the most part is visuall in young yeeres.

Theoph. Therefore these sundrie names, are not tokens of any degrees or dignitie.

Mat. Not at all: For Christ heeretofore commanded this to his disciples struing among themselves for the primacie or chiefety, that hee which would bee the chiefe among them, should be seruant to all. Which indeed was not spoken for their sakes alone, but is set forth as a rule to all Ministers of the Church.

Theoph. Thou hast now declared vnto me that first condition of the lawfull calling of Ministers: I pray thee goe on to the other.

Mat. Another is this, that men come not to it by any corruptions or gifts; but that it be free: so as they that haue the power to chuse, should haue onely the glorie of God, and the edification of his Church, before their eies.

Thirdly, that he which is chosen haue a church appointed vnto him for the execution of his office, whose dutie it is to looke vnto it diligently and carefully.

Theo. If it fall out that hee which is chosen, doe forsake his calling, is he to be accounted a Pastor or Minister?

Mat. No verily: vnlesse peraduenture hee be enforced thereto, for want of health. For otherwise hee is no more worthy the name of a Shepherd, than hee that hath vtterly giuen ouer the keeping and care of the flocke.

Theoph. Is it lawfull for him that is called to the Ministry of the Church, to leaue off that calling to take another?

Mat. It is not lawfull: vnlesse it be vpon some very speciall, known, and approued occasion. For the Apostle witnesseth, that a necessity lieth vpon him to preach the Gospel,

spell, who is once called to the ministerie of the Church. woe vnto him (saith he) if he preach not the Gospell.

1. Cor. 9. 16.

Theo. You haue verily reckoned vp worthy conditions; which whosoever hath, is indeed to bee accounted a Pastor or Shepherd of the flocke of Christ; namely

1. That he feele within him an inward calling,
2. Be of good conuersation,
3. Of sound doctrine,
4. Apt to teach,
5. Be lawfully chosen by the Church,
6. And finally, performe his office diligently toward

the flocke committed to his charge. But yet you make no mention of personall succession from the Apostles time; without which notwithstanding, many think that the calling is void and of none effect.

Personall succession.

Mat. I grant indeed, that, to make a man lawfully called to the ministerie of the Church, Apostolical succession is necessarie: which neuerthelesse is to bee vnderstood of the doctrine of the Apostles; not of their persons. For, euen as heere tofore *Matthias* was successor to *Judas*; that is, a holy seruant of God to a traitor: so also it hath fallen out diuers times, that *Judas* hath succeeded *Matthias*; that is, schismatics & hereticks haue succeeded the most faithfull seruants of Christ. Moreover there is no testimonie in all the Scripture, by the which it can be prooued, that that personall succession is required as necessary to the calling of the Ministers. This indeed is true, that, if there bee both, the calling thereby hath the more authoritie: as it was in that which they call the Primitiue Church: for in it the personall succession was ioined with the truth of doctrine. But when the truth of doctrine is ouerthrowne, then personall succession is nothing else but a visard, which Sathan vseth to blindfold the eies of men, to the end he may keepe them in error. Therefore, when it cometh so to passe, as it is now in the Church of Rome, what madnesse is it, to desire that the election and calling of Ministers, to preach the doctrine of Christ and his Apostles, should hang vpon their person and wil, that bewray themselves to be his open enemies? and whose calling if it were examined by the former rule expressed in the word of God

should be found to be void and nothing worth.

Theoph. I desire you in few words to declare vnto mee those points, wherein the truth of Christian doctrine is ouerthrowen, in the Papacie.

Mat. It standeth chiefly in two heads or principal things.

The first is, in that the sincere & true worship of God is defiled with innumerable superstitions, yea with idolatry. The other is that which respecteth the benefit of Christ: which indeed is ouerthrowen, with the doctrine

1. Of Free-will,
2. Of iustification by workes,
3. Of the merit of workes,
4. Of the intercession of Saints,
5. Of the Popes supremacie,
6. Of the workes of supererogation,
7. Of Pardons,
8. Of Purgatorie fire,

Out of which vngodly and wicked doctrines, the Masse was at length forged and patched vp, by the Church of Rome.

Theoph. The first five of these haue already beene declared by you: but the sixt, namely of workes of supererogation, I scarce vnderstand what it meaneth. I would therefore haue you shew it me briefly.

Works of supererogation.

Mat. To supererogate in Latine signifieth so much, as in the businesse of another man to lay out a greater summe than we receiued of him, by meanes whereof hee is made debter vnto vs.

But these men dreame, that men may doe more good works than God hath commanded: and those according to this similitude, they call workes of supererogation, signifying that in respect of them they account God to bee in their debts; than which doctrine, what is more monster-like? for any to beleue, that a mortall man can binde his Creator vnto him: to whom notwithstanding, whatsoever good thing he is able at any time to performe, that all he is indebted and bound to doe, according as hath beene shewed of vs in the chapter of workes. But what a mischief it is, that a great part of these workes of supererogation, is nothing else but idolatry or superstition? such as be religious

A short rehearfall of Popish impieties.

ous pilgrimages, monasticall life, and such other of that kinde, wherewith God is euen offended. Wherefore seeing they haue set themselues against his will, the Lord is not onely nothing in their debt : but contrariwise they are so much the more holden guiltie before his iudgement seat.

Theoph. Verily, till now I knew not that opinion, as neither the other concerning pardons, which I desire thee to declare vnto me.

Mat. It is no lesse absurd than the other, forasmuch as it hangeth vpon it. And these doctrines do leane & stay themselues vpon two most impious and vngodly foundations.

Popish pardons.

1. First, because they thinke that Christ by his death hath satisfied, not for the punishment, but for the fault onely of those finnes which are committed of vs after Baptisme : and therefore that we our selues must satisfie for it, either in this life, or in Purgatorie fire, till it be fully paid.

2. Secondly, that one drop of Christs bloud was sufficient for our redemption. And that whatsoever he suffered besides, which is indeed an infinite merit, is laid vp in the treasure of the Church, together with the innumerable works of supererogation wrought by hee-Saints and shee-Saints, for the which God is indebted vnto them. Of this treasure (say they) the Pope is the dispenser and steward, whereof he giueth to such as he seeth good, that is, to such as pay money. That gift they call Indulgences or pardons, because they serue to remit or lessen somewhat of the punishment, to be otherwise suffered in Purgatorie fire.

As often therefore as the Pope by his indulgences granteth ten, twenty, or an hundred yeeres of pardon, this hee meaneth, that so much is diminished of the time of that punishment, which wee had deserued for full satisfaction to bee suffered for our finnes, either in this life, or in the life to come. Yea they say further (such is the height of their impietie) that these pardons doe profit the dead, namely such as be in the fire of Purgatorie ; insomuch, as that if the Pope would seriously and in earnest draw forth that his treasure of pardons, he could (say they) emptie it, and send the soules tormented in Purgatorie, directly into the heavens.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why therefore doth hee it not? according to the paterne of that pardon, the Vicar whereof hee saith that he is vpon the earth.

Mat. Lest that Purgatorie fire should be altogether put out: by the which the Church of Rome hath gotten so great riches, wherewith it now aboundeth.

Theoph. I do verily see, that vpon good cause it was said of thee, that the truth of doctrine is vterly ouerthrowen in the Church of Rome. For these two points, which thou hast euen now spoken of, doe almost altogether abolish and take away the grace of God, and benefit of Christ. Let vs now goe forward to the rest. Concerning the first part of this point, namely the lawfull calling of Ministers, I require no more. Let vs speake of the other, namely of the word of God which they are to preach. How many principall parts be there of it?

The Law.

Mat. Two: the Law, and the Gospell.

Theoph. What vnderstandest thou, by the name of the Law?

Mat. That doctrine by which is taught what is to bee done to obey God; which indeed is contained in the ten commandements which we lately expounded.

Theoph. But what is the Gospell?

The Gospell.

Mat. The word of it selfe signifieth good tidings: but in this place it is taken for that doctrine, which containeth the promise of forgiveness of sinnes, and euerlasting life, which God hath made vnto vs in the word, by his Sonne. And it is called good tidings, because it is the most excellent message of all that can be brought.

Theoph. To what end must the Law be preached?

Mat. That men by the knowledge of their sinnes, may be brought to Christ, and to repentance and amendment of life. For therefore God gaue it, as wee haue said in his place.

Theoph. Whereunto is the preaching of the Gospell to be referred?

Mat. Heere to, that the penitent may bee assured of the forgiveness of sins, and the enioying of eternall life. For this cause Christ saith; that so he ought to haue suffered, & rise againe the third day; and that, in his name, repentance

tance and forgiuenesse of finnes should be preached vnto all nations. But he saith expressly, *in his name*; because both repentance, and the forgiuenesse of finnes, haue their ground and foundation in the force of his death and resurrection: without the which we can neither repent, nor obtaine forgiuenesse of finnes; as it hath also beene said in its owne place.

Theoph. What is the cause that Christ maketh mention of repentance, before the forgiuenesse of finnes?

Mat. Not indeede to teach that repentance goeth before forgiuenesse of finnes: forasmuch as this rather goeth before that; for no man can repent, except (his sins being pardoned) the Holy Ghost bee giuen him, by the helpe whereof he may repent: But to teach the Ministers, that the doctrine of remission of finnes, is not to bee applied but to the penitent: seeing that, faith (by the which we are made partakers of Christ and his benefits) maketh it selfe apparent and to bee seene by repentance; which also was shewed in the proper place.

Theo. Seeing repentance is to be preached with remission of sins, it followeth, that the morall Law is not contrary to the Gospell of grace.

Mat. Neither is it indeede contrarie, but in respect of them which seeke their saluation, either wholly or in part, by their good workes: for the Apostle saith; As many of you as bee iustified by the Law, are made void of Christ; and are fallen from grace.

But in respect of the faithfull, who know that their saluation dependeth vpon the onely mercie of God in Christ, there is a good agreement betweene the Law and the Gospell. For the Law sheweth vs sinne, and the damnation that wee haue pulled vpon our selues by it, and so, it leadeth vs to the Gospell, by the which sinne is put away, and we discharged of condemnation.

Secondly, the Law sheweth what is to be done: but the Gospell, by the spirit of regeneration, ministreth vnto vs power both to will and to doe.

Theoph. Seeing there is so good a consent betweene the Law and the Gospell, wherefore doth *Paul* say; You are not vnder the Law, but vnder grace? for it seemeth hee would

The agree-
ment and dis-
agreement of
the Law and
Gospell.
Gal. 5.4.

Rm. 6.14.

would say thus much ; that the Law is abolished and taken away by the Gospell of grace.

How the
Law is taken
away.

Gal. 3. 13.

Mat. 5. 17.

Rom. 3. 31.

Mat. And indeede hee vnderstandeth it of the abolishing of the Law by the Gospell, but concerning the condemnation and curse of it onely, as he himselfe in another place expoundeth, in these words ; Christ hath redeemed vs from the curse of the Law, when hee was made a curse for vs. Howbeit concerning the vse of it, it is no way abolished ; for Christ himselfe saith ; I came not to take away the Law, but to fulfill it. Which also the Apostle confirmeth in the Epistle to the Romans. For, after that hee had taught, that wee are iustified not by the Law, but by faith in Iesus Christ, hee presently addeth ; Doe wee therefore make the Law void through faith ? God forbid ; yea rather we establish the Law. And indeede, why should that most excellent benefir, which the Gospell yeeldeth vnto vs, discharge vs from the worship and seruing of God ? by the which rather we are the more inuited and stirred vp to performe it towards him.

Theoph. Is the Law therefore neuer to be separated from the Gospell ?

The Law neuer
to be separated
from the Gospell.

Mat. The one indeede is to bee distinguished from the other, that we confound not the mercy of God with our works: which they do corruptly, that will mingle the righteousness of faith, with the righteousness of the Law, that is to say, heauen with earth: neuerthelesse, they are not to be separated, neither yet to be preached apart.

Mar. 16. 15.

Theoph. But Christ sending forth his Apostles to preach the Gospell thorowout the whole world ; maketh mention onely of the Gospell ; for hee saith ; Goe preach the Gospell to euery creature.

Luk. 24. 46.

A right manner
of preaching.

Mat. The word Gospell, set by it selfe, comprehenderh also vnder it the doctrine of repentance, and therefore the Law, no lesse than the doctrine of remission of sinnes. Which indeede is plaine by the place of *Luke* alleadged euen now, who expoundeth those words of *Marke* : His words bee these ; Christ ought to suffer, and in his name repentance and forgiveness of sinnes to be preached. It is therefore the dutie of Ministers, in their Sermons, by the preaching of the Law, to bring men to the true know-
ledge

ledge and feeling of their finnes, and to ioine therewith the threatnings denounced against the breakers of the Law, and to exhort them to true repentance and amendment of life. Then they ought to set before them the forgiveness of finnes, from the doctrine of the Gospell of grace. But contrariwise, they ought to propound wrath and the iust iudgement of God against the disobedient and stubborne, except they conuert and repent. And these indeed bee the keies of the Church, which Christ had promised to *Peter*, and in him to the other Apostles, and to all Pastours: which also after his resurrection hee deliuered to his Apostles, when hee sent them to preach the Gospell thorowout the whole world.

The keies of
the Church,

Theoph. But why did he then promise those keies to *Peter* alone? which neuerthelesse, as thou saist, hee meant to giue to the other Apostles also?

Mat. Because then he spake to *Peter* only. But as a little before, *Peter* not onely in his owne name, but also in the name of all the rest of the Apostles, which had that one faith, had confessed that Iesus was the Christ, and the son of the liuing God: in like manner, when Christ promised the keies to *Peter*, he meant that they were also promised to the rest of the Apostles, which hee doth sufficiently declare in the deliuerie of them: for hee saith to all at once; **Receiue the Holy Ghost: Whose finnes you remit, they are remitted to them: whose finnes you retaine, they be retained.** The same also did the other Apostles and al the Pastours confirme, when, exercising their ministerie, they vsed those keies.

Theoph. Wherefore doth Christ call the ministerie of Pastours, by the name of keies?

Mat. To the end we might vnderstand, that the Kingdome of heauen (as wee haue declared before) is by the ministerie of the Church set open to the beleeuers and penitent, and that it is shut against the vnbeleeuers and stubborne; namely, when as by it the former haue their finnes forgiven, that so they may come to eternall life: but to the other they be retained, that so they may bee shut from it. For God doth ratifie that in heauen, which the Ministers vpon earth pronounce out of his word, euen as it appea-
reth

216 *Concerning the ministry of the Word.*

Mat. 16. 19.

What it is to
bind & loose.

reth by the words of Christ himselfe vnto Peter : for after promise of the keyes, presently hee addeth ; Whatsoever thou shalt binde in earth, shall bee bound in heauen : and whatsoever thou shalt loose in earth, shall be loosed in heauen. And the selfe same thing hee repeated after to all the Apostles, to shew that they had like authoritie of binding and loosing giuen to them with Peter.

Theoph. Therefore to bind and loose, is nothing els but to declare the remission of sinnes, or to retaine them.

Mat. Indeed nothing, as it is plaine by the interpretation of Christ himselfe ; for hee said to his Apostles in the place which euen now we recited, Receiue the holy ghost : whose sinnes ye remit, they be remitted vnto them ; whose sinnes you shall retaine, they shall be retained. For there is no harder band than sin, forasmuch as being bound with it, we be held, and indeed willingly, vnder the power and tyranny of the diuell and death, and it cannot be loosed by any strength of man, but by the only might of Christ.

Theoph. Why then doth Christ commit the office of binding and loosing to the Minister ? seeing he himselfe alone hath the power of binding and loosing.

2. Cor 5. 19.

Mat. It is, that we may vnderstand, that the Ministers be as it were Ambassadors and Proclaimers of the will of God ; which Paul teacheth in these words : God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himselfe, not imputing to them their sinnes : and hath put in vs this word of reconciliation. Therefore wee are Ambassadors in the name of Christ ; as though God by vs did exhort you, wee intreat you in Christs stead to be reconciled to God.

Theoph. I see not therefore, that the Ministers haue more power of binding and loosing granted them, than any other priuate man ; for there is none that may not assure the beleeuers & penitent of the forgiveness of his sinnes ; and contrariwise, which may not set the iudgement of God before the vnbeleuer and obstinate, except hee repent. And that verily shal be confirmed in heauen, as it was pronounced by that priuate person : for that is the will of God reuealed in his Word.

Of the authoritie of the
Ministers of
the Church.

Mat. That is right indeede ; but there is some speciall thing to be considered in the promise of Christ made to
the

the Ministers: namely, that by his spirit he will giue more efficacy and force to their words than to the words of any priuate man; so as they shall by faith be receiued of the beleuer, and shall terrifie the conscience of the vnbeleuer, and set before his eies the wrath and iudgement of God. For otherwise the name of the keies of the kingdome of heauen should falsly bee giuen vnto the ministerie of the Church: seeing, that to bring vs to enter into it, it is not enough that the doctrine of forgiuenesse of sinnes beat our eares, but especially that it enter into our hearts, and be receiued of vs in faith and obedience: whereunto is referred that saying of Paul; Neither my speech, nor my preaching stood in the enticing words of mans wisdom, but in the demonstration or euidence of spirituall power. For this cause also Isaiah calleth the preaching of the word the arme of the Lord, that is, the instrument, by the which hee declareth his might and power, that hee may bring vs to saluation.

1. Cor. 2. 4.

Isay 53.

Theoph. I see indeed, that the force and fruit of preaching the Word of God is very great. For those three steps by the which we obtaine spirituall health, whereof thou didst intreat in the Chapter of Faith, are by it daily called to vse and practise.

The efficacie
and fruit of
the Word
preached.

Mat. Thou iudgeth right. For first, the law is preached, that we may acknowledge our deadly disease, namely, sin.

Secondly, the Gospell is preached, wherein the sauing remedy is offered vnto vs in Christ.

Last of all, Faith which is wrought in vs, and increased by the preaching of the Word, applieth that medicine vnto vs; so as we obtaine saluation, euen the full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

Theoph. The article of remission of sinnes in the Creed, vnlesse I be deceiued, is therefore set after the article of the Church, to the end we might know, that it is offered vnto vs by the ministry of it.

Mat. It is indeed: and therefore there is no forgiuenesse of sinnes, neither saluation without the Church; as in the floud there was no safety out of the Arke of Noah, wherein also at that time the Church of God was then shut vp; that being as it were a type of it.

Theoph.

Theoph. You haue hitherto largely enough taught, that by the ministry of the word we do truly obtaine forgiveness of our finnes. Notwithstanding, there be two things behinde, whereof I will aske you, before we come to the other Treatise:

1. First, whether God do wholly (as they say) forgive to the repentant all their finnes?

2. Secondly, whether hee forgive them perfectly; namely, remitteth the punishment and the fault, so as they be not any more imputed vnto vs?

2. Iob. 1. 7.
All finnes be
forgiven to
the penitent.

Mat. Let vs speake of the former, in the first place. *Iohn* saith, that the bloud of Christ doth wash vs from all sinne. Hee that saith, *All*, excepteth nothing. Now, repentance yeeldeth vnto vs a more certaine testimonie of our faith: by the which, as hath beene said, wee be made partakers of Christ, and of his gifts. Whereupon it followeth, that whosoever repenteth, may most certainly determine, that all his finnes (albeit they bee greuous) are forgiven and done away. Which also is taught, by the example of that sinfull woman, and of the theefe.

Mat. 12. 32

Of the sinne
against the
Holy Ghost.
Heb. 6. 4.

Theoph. But Christ saith, that the sinne against the Holy Ghost shall neuer be forgiven.

Mat. Hee saith so indeede: And the Apostle to the Hebrewes sheweth, that it is impossible that such as fall into it should bee renewed by repentance. For that is the gift of God, granted to them onely, of whom he hath determined in Christ to haue mercie.

Theoph. But what is that sinne against the Holy Ghost?

Mat. These words, Against the Holy Ghost, do sufficiently declare what it is: namely, when any, after that hee hath by the Holy Ghost been enlightened with the knowledge of the truth of the Gospell, standeth against that truth, not for feare, or through infirmity, but vpon wilfull malice. For then wittingly and willingly hee resisteth the Holy Ghost, and maketh warre against him.

Theoph. How knowest thou that this is the sinne against the Holy Ghost?

Mat. First, it may bee gathered of that, which gaue our Saviour Christ occasion to speake of it: namely, that hee might proue the Scribes and Pharisees to be guilty of that
horrible

horrible sinne, who said, that the miracles which hee did, were wrought by the diuell, wherof notwithstanding they were not ignorant that God was the Authour, and Christ himselfe by most certaine arguments did declare. And his miracles they did maliciously dispraise in the hatred of his doctrine, which they perceiued was manifestly confirmed by them. From hence therefore it is plain, that they sinne against the Holy Ghost, who vpon set malice stand against the knowen truth. Adde heereunto, that by sundry places of the Scripture it appeareth, that euery other sinne is forgiven: not excepting that which is against the doctrine of faith, so as it be done either of ignorance, (as it was with *Paul* when he persecuted the Church) or through infirmity and weaknesse, as when *Peter* denied Christ.

Theoph. It is verily a wonder, that so horrible wickednes can enter into the minds of men, as vpon purposed malice to strue against the knowen truth.

Mat. It commeth to passe by the iust iudgement of God vnto those that haue long and much despised and set light by his most precious gifts; namely, his louing kindnes and mercy in Christ (the knowledge wherof, notwithstanding he had vouchsafed them): and at length they be deliuered to the power of the diuell, that by steps and degrees they may fall to that extreme and finall Apostasie. And because they are by it become like vnto Sathan (namely, in that, vpon knowledge and wilfull malice, they resist the truth) they, no otherwise than he himselfe, be deprived of all hope of saluation.

Theoph. Let vs now come to the other question. When God forgiveth sins, whether doth he it perfectly, so as hee remitteth the punishment and the fault?

Mat. As God is perfect, so doth hee perfectly forgive sinnes; so as hee neuer remembreth them, nor imputeth them vnto vs: for so he saith euery where by his Prophets; If your sinnes were as crimson, they shall be made whiter than snow: if they were as red as scarlet, they shall be as wool. I haue put away thy transgressions, as thicke clouds; and thy sins, as a mist. He will lay aside our iniquities, and cast all our sinnes into the bottome of the sea. As farre as the East is distant from the West, so farre doth he remooue

Whether
God remitte-
teth the pu-
nishment &
the fault.

Esa. 1. 18.

Esa. 44. 22.

Mich. 7. 19.

Psal. 103.

12.

An obiection
against the
doctrine of
remitting the
punishment
and fault.

The answer
to the ob-
iection.

Esa. 53 4.

Rom. 8.1.

our sins from vs. Neither is this any maruell. For, seeing the forgiuenesse of our sinnes is grounded vpon Christ, in whom they be fully punished, God should be vniust, if he required any thing further for them.

Theoph. But wee reade that *Dauid* suffered many punishments, after that (by the message of *Nathan*) he was certified of the forgiuenesse of his adulterie. For the childe that was borne vnto him of *Bathsheba* died. Moreouer also his sonne *Absolon* was raised vp against him, who both made warre vpon him, and defiled his wiues: which punishment was indeed denounced against him by the Prophet. Whereupon it seemeth to follow, that God forgiueth the sinne, but retaineth the punishment.

Mat. This is the doctrine of the Romanists, from whence came the dreame of Pardons and Purgatorie fire, as hath before beene declared of vs. Neuerthelesse, I am glad it is so come to passe, that we may fitly speak of it in this place. For I will shew that it is most absurd, inasmuch as it separateth those things, which of their owne nature doe wholly hang together. For if thou take away the fault, there is no place left for punishment: otherwise God should be vniust, if hee should punish whom hee accounteth not faulty. Moreouer, seeing Christ himselfe in his owne body suffered the punishments due to our sinnes, it is not to be doubted but that hee hath discharged vs from the same: euen as *Esay* expressly affirmeth, in these words: Verily, hee hath borne our griefes, and hath carried our sorrowes: and we thought him stricken, wounded of God, and humbled; but hee was wounded for our iniquities, and broken for our sins. The chastisement of our peace was vpon him, and by his stripes we are healed. All wee as sheepe haue gone astray, euery one hath turned to his own way, and the Lord hath laied vpon him the iniquities of vs all. For this cause also *Paul* saith; That there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Iesus. Whereby it plainly appeareth, that God (when through Christ he forgiueth sins) doth no lesse remit the punishment of them, than the fault. For otherwise our case should be most miserable (yea rather we are already cast-awaies) and the forgiuenesse of our sinnes auaieth vs nothing, if the punishment be retained.

Theoph.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because wee be vnable to beare the burthen of it; forasmuch as it is infinite no lesse than the fault: for they be of the same nature.

Theoph. What thinke you of the afflictions which God sendeth vnto vs, euen after the forgiuenesse of sinnes?

Mat. I say they be not sent to be punishments of sinnes: but to bee vnto vs in stead of chastisements and corrections to humble vs, and that we may be the wiser after: for the Apostle saith: When wee are chastised, we are instructed of the Lord, that wee should not be condemned with the world.

Theoph. Therefore the nature of afflictions bee changed when they bee sent to the godly: for they bee not punishments of sinnes, to satisfie the iudgement of God.

Mat. You say well: and the same is to be thought of the infirmities of the body: which we know be left vs, not to bee punishments of sinnes, but in exercising of patience. The same also is to bee said of death, which to vs is as a bridge, by the which wee passe ouer vnto euerlasting life, and a way is made for the resurrection; which neuertheless, of it owne nature, is a punishment of sinne, and putteth vs in minde of it. But it is not sent to the faithfull to call them to account for their sinnes, as it commeth to passe to the wicked.

Theoph. By the solution and answer of these questions, mee thinkes I vnderstand this, that by the ministry of the Church, all sinnes of what kinde soeuer be forgiuen to the penitent. Moreouer, that there is no other satisfaction for them required of God, besides the most precious blood of Iesus Christ; by the which, both the fault and punishment of them is wholly taken away: which doctrine doth indeed bring the greatest consolation. Howbeit, before I make an end of this speech, I will aske you, whether Gods indulgence (or readinesse to forgiue) doe minister vnto men occasion to flatter themselues in their sinnes, and to continue in them?

Mat. Nay rather cleane contrariwise. For the hope and assurance of obtaining pardon, doth stir vp the godly, that they doe not cloake or maintaine themselves in their sins.

I. Co. II. 32.

Whether the declaration of Gods mercie giue men occasion to continue in their sinnes

Psal. 130. 4.

Ezech. 3. 20.

Whereunto that saying of the Prophet is to bee referred; With thee there is mercy, that thou maiest be feared. For, from whence is obedience, but from loue? And againe, whence is loue, but from the knowledge and assurance of Gods goodnesse towards vs? Moreouer, this doctrine of the forgiuenes of sinnes, pertaineth not to any, saue to the penitent. But concerning the rest, the Scripture denounceth to them the wrath and iudgement of God. Yea rather the Lord saith by the Prophet, that euen as he will forget the sinnes of him that repenteth, so he will not remember the righteousnesse of him that shall turne from the right way. Whereupon it is plaine, that this doctrine doth not onely bring very great comfort to the faithfull, but also doth continually spur them forward, to apply themselves to amendment of life.

C H A P. II.

Of the Sacraments, ordained of God to bee as it were seales of the Word; that wee may with more assurance embrace the promise by Christ, revealed in the word.

T H E O P H I L V S.

What Sacra-
ments be.

Hitherto we haue sufficiently spoken of the ministerie of the word. Now we are to come to the sacraments: And first declare vnto me what sacraments be.

Mat. They bee signes and Sacramentall rites ordained of God in the Church to bee adioined to the preaching of the Word, that the promise of Christ made in it, may be confirmed in vs more and more.

Theoph. Why are those signes and sacramentall rites called Sacraments?

Mat. The ancient teachers of the Christian Church, called them by this name, in respect of the affinity or nearnesse betweene them and a Sacrament, that is to say, that solemne oath, by the which souldiers bound themselves to the Emperour or chiefe Captaine.

Theoph. Shew me that affinitie or agreement.

Mat. First, as souldiers when they receiued their pay, bound themselves to the Emperour by solemne oath, to liue and die vnder his gouernment: so wee when wee are partakers of the signes, which God hath appointed in his Church,

Church, by the which he bestoweth vpon vs spiritual gifts, doe binde our selues to him by the same oath. Morcouer, as souldiers when they tooke vpon them this oath, receiued the Emperours badge; that it might appeare, they had giuen themselues to him, and were become his: so also we when we are publikely partakers of the Sacraments which God hath instituted in his Church, doe take vpon vs as it were the ensigne or armes of Christ, that it may be known we serue God, and professe true religion.

Theoph. I vnderstand the reason of the word. Now let vs come to the thing it selfe. The Sacraments, thou saidst, were ordained of God, for confirmation of the promise made by God, through Christ, in his word. What is that promise?

Mat. It is expounded of Christ himselfe, in these words, So God loued the world, that hee gaue his only begotten Sonne, that whosoever beleeueth in him, should not perish, but haue life euerlasting. *John 3.16.*

The Sacraments therefore bee as it were visible pledges of the loue of God towards vs, by the which we are confirmed in it. But, because that loue is grounded in Christ alone, the Sacraments represent vnto vs no other thing than the vnion and fellowship that we haue with him and his gifts.

Theoph. Of whom ought the Sacraments to be administered?

Mat. Christ committed that office to them alone, to whom the preaching of the word is committed; without the which neither ought the Sacraments to bee administered: for they be as seales thereof.

Of whom the Sacraments ought to be administered,

Theoph. There is therefore a very great likenesse and agreement betweene the word and the Sacraments.

Mat. Very great. For by both of them God doth offer vnto vs Iesus Christ his Sonne, with all his gifts: and wee are made partakers of them, if they be not refused of vs by vnbeleefe. This onely is the difference, that the preaching of the word affecteth the hearing; but the Sacraments affect the other senses. Whereupon, of a certaine Father, they be most fitly called, Visible words. For, they doe present Christ and his benefits, as it were before our

eies, and deliuer them into our hands : that, by those sundry meanes, our faith might be confirmed, and we come so much the neerer to him, and feele the greater working of his spirit within vs.

What conditions be required in Sacraments.

Theoph. What conditions bee required in the Sacraments?

Mat. Three: without which, they cannot bee truly Sacraments, but false.

Theo. What are those conditions?

Mat. First, that they be ordained of God.

Secondly, that there bee a commandement of God, whereby we may vse them.

Thirdly, that there bee also a certaine promise ; by the which it be assured, that we shall be partakers of the things that are represented by them.

Theoph. Why say you, it is necessary that they be ordained of God?

Why the first condition.

Mat. Because, as there is none besides himselfe, which can assure vs of the loue he beareth towards vs in Christ: so is ther not any man that may ordaine visible signes to confirme it. Moreouer, in the institution it selfe, there bee three things to be noted :

- 1 The signes and Sacramentall rites.
- 2 The spirituall and inuisible things, signified by those signes.
- 3 The anologie or agreement of the signes, with the things signified.

Theoph. I acknowledge it to be necessarie, that Sacraments be ordained of God ; but, I desire to vnderstand, why this also is necessarie, that there should be a commandement of God, to the intent we may vse them?

Why the second condition.

Mat. Because nothing is to be done in the Church of God, except there bee first the expresse commandement of God (who in it is Lord and Master) : especially when the question is of things that concerne our saluation ; such as the Sacraments be.

Theoph. Why is it againe required, that there be a promise annexed?

Why the third condition.

Mat. Because, vnles there be a promise, the Sacraments shalbe vnprofitable vnto vs. Now, that promise which on the

the behalfe of God hath the effect, is as it were the soule of the Sacraments, whereupon all their force and efficacy dependeth; and not vpon the holinesse or worthinesse of him of whom they be ministred, or vpon the vertue of some words pronounced. Therefore, without that promise, the Sacraments shall bee nothing else but vaine and fruitlesse ceremonies.

Theoph. Thinkest thou that the Sacraments, if they be ministred of some wicked man and hypocrite, haue as much efficacie and force, as if they were ministred by some good man?

Mat. I thinke it: so, as on our part, we bring nothing to hinder it. As good seed, if it finde good ground, will beare fruit, notwithstanding it bee sown of some naughtie and wicked man. For the vertue of it hangeth not vpon the sower (as neither doe the Sacraments vpon the Minister) but vpon the blessing and grace of God only.

Theoph. Let vs come to the number of the Sacraments: How many be there in the Christian Church?

Mat. Two: namely, Baptisme and the Lords Supper.

Theoph. Seeing they declare vnto vs one thing, as also the Word doth (namely, the loue of God towards vs in Christ) what is the cause that they be two in number?

Mat. Because, by Baptisme, God doth witnesse, that we bee receiued of him into his couenant, through the communication of Christ and his gifts: but by the Supper he auoucherh, that we are reteined and kept in it, till we be receiued into the heauenly life. And for this cause Baptisme is only once ministred, but the Supper often times.

Theoph. Declare this reason to me more at large.

Mat. Yet, to me it seemeth easie. For, seeing Baptisme is the assured conueiance vnto vs of the couenant made with vs in Christ, if it should be iterated or vsed the second time, or oftner, it were all one as if we said, that God had abrogated or disanulled the former couenant, to ordaine or appoint another: which indeed is altogether contrary to the very nature, truth, and constancie of God. For the Apostle saith: With him there is no changing, or shadow of alteration. But, concerning the Supper, it is altogether required, both for edifying and for comfort, that

Vpon whom
dependeth
the efficacy
of the Sacra-
ments.
The number
of the Sacra-
ments.

James I. 17.

it bee oft repeated and vsed of vs : seeing that (such is the weaknesse of our faith) wee doe euery moment call into doubt whether God will continue in his loue towards vs, or no; especially, when we looke into our many sinnes, for the which wee are indeed worthy to bee excluded by him. But, God would assure vs of his loue, by this Sacrament: in the which hee doth both offer and exhibit (or giue) Iesus Christ vnto vs, with his treasures; in whom alone, as hath beene said, that couenant and loue hath the foundation.

Whether the
Sacraments
be necessary
to saluation.

Theoph. I will yet demand of thee one question generally pertaining to the Sacraments, before wee begin the particular exposition of them both. Whether are they so necessarie to saluation, that no man can be saued without partaking of them?

Mat. It is a most absurd opinion of those, who thinke that God hath tied his grace to the Sacraments: for they be only for this end ordained, that the grace and fauour, yeelded vs before in Christ, should bee confirmed and ratified. Therefore it was most excellently said of an ancient Father; That the want of Baptisme did not condemne: but the contempt of it.

Bernard. ep.
77.
Mat. 16. 16.

Theoph. But Christ saith; Whosoever beleueth and is baptized, shall be saued. Out of which words it seemeth may be gathered, that Christ determineth Baptisme to be necessary to saluation, no lesse than faith. It seemeth also, that the same may be gathered concerning the supper, out of that which Christ himselfe said in another place; Verily verily, I say vnto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, ye haue no life in you.

Iohn 6. 53.

Mat. In the first place, I will answer to those things which thou saiedst of Baptisme. And I affirme, that in that place Christ doth not set down the necessity of Baptisme; but rather sheweth what that true faith is, by the which we are saued; namely, that it is not dead and hidden, but liuely, and declared by outward confession, so that the beleeuers doe ioine themselues to the Church, and be partakers of the preaching of the word & administration of the Sacraments: whereunto that saying of Paul ought to bee referred; We beleue with the heart, to righteousness; and confesse with the mouth, to saluation. And, that this is the
minde

Rom. 10. 10.

minde of Christ, it is gathered by the member following : for he saith ; But whosoever beleueth not, shall bee condemned. For if this had beene his meaning, that no man could haue beene saued without Baptisme, he would haue said thus ; But whosoever shall not beleue, or shall not be baptized, shall be condemned. Seeing therefore he saith, that vnbeleefe is the cause of condemnation, by the contrary he meaneth, that faith is sufficient to saluation; which he himselfe often times confirmeth when he saith ; He that beleueth in the Sonne, hath life euerlasting ; but hee, that beleueth not in the Sonne, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. Concerning the other place, of eating the flesh of Christ and drinking his blood, hee doth not there entreat particularly of the supper ; but generally of the vnion that we ought to haue with his bodie ; which indeed is altogether necessarie to saluation ; as hath beene fully proued by vs in the first Booke. But that vnion is no lesse wrought by the word apprehended in faith, than it is by the Sacraments : as hath beene said already.

John 3. 6.3.
5. 24. 6.
6.4.

CHAP. III.

Of Baptisme : by the which God testifieth that wee are receiued of him into couenant ; in that hee doth communicate Christ Iesus vnto vs together with his benefits.

THEOPHILVS.

NOW we are to weigh those two Sacraments ech by it selfe ; and in both, those three conditions are to bee searched out, that are required to make them truly Sacraments. Let vs therefore begin with Baptisme. What is the institution of it ?

Mat. First indeede, it was instituted of God by the minsterie of *Iohn Baptist*, who thereupon had his name. Afterward it was dedicated and sanctified of Christ in his owne body, when hee would be baptized of him, and when hee commanded the Apostles to baptize.

The institution of Baptisme.

Theo. Let vs see those three things which thou saiedst were required in the lawfull institution of a Sacrament ; namely :

1. The signe and Sacramentall rites.
2. The signification of them.

3. The

The signe.

3. The likenesse and agreement betweene both.

Mat. The signe of this Sacrament is water, which signifieth the blood of Christ; that is, the force of his death: because it hath that effectually working, in cleansing our soules from the filthinesse of sinne, which materiall water hath in cleansing our bodies. Thereupon this Sacrament hath the name of Baptisme: for it signifieth a rinsing or washing away. Now thou hast the signe.

The Sacramentall rite.

But the Sacramentall rite is, that he which is to be baptized, be sprinkled with water, or dipped in it: which was vsed in former times; and by it two things was signified vnto vs:

1. First, that our soules are sprinkled with the blood of Christ, that is, be indeed partakers of the merit of his death: by the which we obtaine full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

Tit. 3. 5.

2. Secondly, that we be regenerated into a new life. Therefore Baptisme is of *Paul* called the Bath of regeneration. By which words, those two gifts of God, that wee obtaine in baptisme, are excellently noted.

Theoph. How can the sprinkling of water be a signe or token of our regeneration?

Mat. The Scripture is wont to set downe two parts of it: namely, the mortification or death of the old man, and the rising againe of the new man, as it hath been sayd of vs in his place. But this mortification, which hath the force and working from the death and buriall of Christ, is most fitly represented by the sprinkling of water. For it is all one as if our olde man being wounded to the death, or euen swallowed vp of death it selfe, were buried with Christ. Then withall followeth the resurrection of the new man, which hangeth vpon the resurrection of Christ; and is represented by the waters making cleane: for by it is signified, that together with him we doe rise from the graue of death to become new creatures.

Theoph. There bee yet behinde the promise and commandement of this Sacrament.

Mat. 28 19.
The commandement and promise.

Mat. The words of Christ, set downe by *Mathew*, doe contain both: Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost.

Theoph.

Theoph. The commandement I see, but not the promise.

Mat. It is contained vnder the commandement. For, when any is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is as if it were said vnto him; By this visible signe I do assure thee, that all thy sinnes are washed away, and thy selfe regenerated, not by any vertue or force that is in me or in this water wherewith thou art sprinkled; but by the mercy of the heauenly Father, who, for this purpose doth, by the power of the holy Ghost, communicate vnto thee Christ Iesus his Sonne, with all his benefits, and vniteth thee vnto him, so as thou art made partaker of him. Seeing therefore Christ commandeth, that these things should be preached, it is not to be doubted, but that he promisseth the thing it selfe. Baptisme therefore is giuen vs of God, as it were writings sealed; by the which hee assureth vs of the full forgiuenesse of all our sinnes.

Theoph. What sinnes thinkest thou be done away by Baptisme? Only originall sinne?

Mat. That indeed is first done away; not that it doth not remaine in vs: but because it is not imputed. The same also we may affirme of other sinnes; which be effects of it. For they be put away by this Sacrament: they bee put away (I say) both they that bee past, and those that are to come. The words therfore deliuered of the Minister in Baptisme, by the commandement of God (namely, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, Sonne & Holy Ghost) should alwaies be in our eares, euen vntill the last gaspe: & by them ought wee to be assured of the full forgiuenesse of our sinnes. For the blood of Christ, in the which we are once baptized, is neuer drawen cleane out; but is alwaies fresh, as the Apostle speaketh, that is, full of efficacie and strength, to the continuall washing away of all our filthinesse and iniquities.

Theoph. Thou saiedst in the exposition of this promise, that in this Sacrament the Father did communicate Christ and his benefits vnto vs. But both the signe of it, and the Sacramentall rites, doe only represent vnto vs the participation or fellowship which wee haue with his death; but not the communion we haue with his body.

Mat. We haue taught in the First booke, that no man

The words in Baptisme expounded,

What sinnes be put away in Baptisme.

Heb. 10. 10.
11. 12. 14.
& 9. 13. 14.

Of our vnion with Christ.

can

can be partakers of Christs benefits, which is not made one with him. The one therefore followeth vpon the other. By these things therefore it is prooued, that by Baptisme wee bee truly made partakers both of Christs bodie, and of his benefits ; which also *Paul* confirmeth in these words ; So many of you as be baptized into Christ, haue put on Christ.

Gal. 3. 27.

Theoph. I come againe to the institution of Baptisme, wherein Christ saith to his Apostles ; Goe teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Sonne, and Holy Ghost. What is the cause that Christ commandeth his Apostles to teach first, before they baptize ?

Mat. 28. 19.

Why Christ
would haue
the Word
preached, be-
fore Baptisme
be admini-
stred.

Mat. The reason is most euident. For, seeing the Sacraments be as scales of the word, it is fit that euery one should be first instructed in the doctrine, before he be baptized or confirmed in the same doctrine ; excepting onely the children of the faithfull, of whom there is another reason, which causeth that they are to bee baptized presently after they be borne.

Theoph. What is that reason ?

Baptizing of
children.

Mat. Because God hath promised, in the person of *Abraham*, that hee will be the God of the faithfull, and of their seed. Which selfesame thing God confirmeth in the Law, when he saith ; That he is such a one as sheweth mercie to a thousand generations of those that loue him, and keepe his commandements. Seeing therefore the children of beleeuers appertaine to the couenant of God, it is not to be doubted, but that the Sacrament of it, namely Baptisme, is to be ministred to them. Which is againe confirmed by the example of the Israelites, who by the commandement of God circumcised their children the eight day.

Exod. 20.

Theoph. Is there the same reason of Baptisme, and of Circumcision ?

The agree-
ment be-
tween Cir-
cumcision &
Baptisme.

Mat. Yea, altogether ; and in very deed it is one and the selfe same Sacrament, as concerning the substance. For, after the comming of Christ, Baptisme came in place of Circumcision ; and by it the gifts of God were not diminished, but increased vnto vs. For, as the Sacraments of the new Testament haue a farre more easie and plaine signification than the Sacraments of the old Testament :

stament; so the force and efficacie of them is far greater.

Theoph. But what profit can there come by Baptisme, to a childe without vnderstanding and knowledge?

Mat. Much, if thou consider both the glory of God, the comfort of the parents, and finally the edification and saluation of the childe.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. First of all God is glorified, for that hee sheweth himselfe true in his promises: by the which it is, that hee hath mercy vpon the faithfull, euen to the thousandth generation. Moreover, the parent himselfe is wonderfully comforted, and confirmed in the loue of God; when hee seeth that not onely he himselfe is beloued of God; but also that the loue and grace of God is deriued vnto his children: which God assureth him of, by that visible signe. Finally, concerning the childe, it hath a maruellous benefite bestowed vpon it, in that hee doth so soone obtaine the partaking of Christ and his benefits; by the which he hath the inheritance of eternall life. By the remembrance whereof, when hee commeth to age, hee is wonderfully confirmed in the loue and feare of God; namely, when he calleth to minde, that hee is so much esteemed of God, that euen from his comming into this world, he obtained fellowship in his couenant.

What profit
commeth by
baptizing of
children.

Theoph. But how can a young childe by Baptisme be partaker of Christ and his benefits? seeing it is certaine that he lacketh faith: without which, thou affirmedst before, that no man can haue that fellowship.

Mat. That indeede is true in those that be of yeares, and in such as for their age may belecue. But God worketh in the children of the faithfull, belonging to his couenant, another way vnkowne to vs. Whom also the Apostle doubteth not to call holy, insomuch as they cannot perish, seeing they haue in them a sprigge of faith: which doubtlesse, when time shall come, bringeth forth the fruits, in some sooner, and in others later; as it shall seeme good to the Lord to call them.

How the
children of
belecuers
lacking faith
be partakers
of Christ.
1. Cor. 7. 14.

Theoph. I do now see, that the children of the godly are to bee baptized. Notwithstanding, I will propound one question more, before I go from the speech which I haue begun,

How the children of the godlie bee borne in originall sinne. *Aug. de pecc. meri. & remis. li. 3. cap. 18.*

begun. How can it bee, that those children of the godly should be borne defiled with originall sinne? seeing their parents are purged of it.

Mat. Austin, by an excellent similitude, answereth this question, in these words; Like as chaffe, by the labour and great diligence of man, being seuered from the wheat, abideth notwithstanding in the fruit which groweth of that wheat thus cleansed: so sinne, whereof by Baptisme the parents are cleansed, abideth in those whom they haue begotten. Therefore our children, except they bee borne againe by a spirituall birth, cannot be accounted the children of God, nor heires of eternall life.

CHAP. IIII.

Of the Supper of the Lord; by the which God testifieth that his covenant is enlarged in vs, forasmuch as hee maketh vs more and more partakers of Christ and his benefits.

THEOPHILVS.

Hitherto hath beene spoken of Baptisme: let vs now come to the Supper of the Lord, and let vs begin at the institution of it.

Mat. The Euangelists shew, that it was instituted of Christ, the same night he was betraied, after that hee had supped, & had eatē the paschall lamb according to the law.

Theo. I thinke it was thereupon called Supper.

Mat. It is called Supper, of the Apostle, not so much for this cause, as to shew that it is indeede a spirituall Supper made by God vnto the faithfull; wherein he feedeth them with the body and blood of Iesus Christ into the hope of eternall life.

Theoph. The three heads of the institution are to be examined of vs: namely,

1. The signes and sacramentall rites,
2. Their signification,
3. And finally, the likenesse or agreement betweene both.

Mat. The signes are bread and wine: which indeede do signifie the body and blood of Christ. Because the body and blood of Christ haue that force and efficacie in the feeding of our soules, which bread and wine haue in nourishing,

Of the word Supper, and the institution of it.

The signes of the Supper.

riking our bodies. And, for this cause, Christ also calleth himselfe the bread of life.

Joh. 6. 48.

Theoph. What difference maketh thou betweene the bread and wine of the Supper, and the bread and wine which we vse for our ordinarie meat and drinke?

Mat. Truly none in the substance; but in the vse and ministring of the Supper: concerning which, this I hold, that the one are set before vs for the nourishment of the body: but the other be ordained of God to bee signes of the body and blood of Christ. The same also is to bee thought of the water of Baptisme.

Theo. Why be there two signes in the Supper?

Mat. To the end we might know, that in Christ we haue whole and perfect spirituall food; that is, whatsoever is requisite to our saluation. It was also done for a more perfect remembrance of his death. For the wine, which is the signe of his blood, doth as it were represent it before our eies.

Why there is a double sign in the Supper.

Theoph. Let vs come to the Sacramentall rite, and the signification of it.

Mat. It is double, or two-fold.

1. For the one respecteth the Minister:

2. The other, him which is partaker of the Supper.

The Sacramentall rite of the Supper.

The first is this, to take the bread and breake it: Whereby is signified, that Christ, with sufferings, was broken for our redemption: which himselfe declared in these words, This is my body, that is broken for you. Then, to giue it being broken, and to deliuer the wine in the cup. By which rites is meant, that God doth offer and giue Christ vnto vs, together with all his benefits. The latter rite is, that he which commeth to the Supper, should receiue, eat, and drinke the Bread and wine giuen vnto him. Which indeed doe signifie, that in the Supper we do truly receiue Christ, eat his body, and drinke his blood; by the which wee are nourished into the hope of eternall life, if wee do not put him from vs through vnbeleefe.

What the ministers must doe in ministring the Supper.

What they must do that come to the Lords Table.

Theoph. What is it, to eat the body of Christ?

Mat. To be so neerely ioined with his body, as the meat which we eat is with our owne body.

Theoph. What is it, to drinke the blood of the Lord?

Mat. To bee as truly partakers of his death and passion

on, as if we our selues had suffered the same. And this doth our Sauour Christ meane, when hee saith ; Verily, verily, I say vnto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Sonne of man, and drinke his blood, you haue no life in you. Hee that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternall life. But this is to be remembred (which we spake before, in the Chapter of faith) namely, that, by the merit of Christs death (represented in the holy Supper, by wine, that signifieth his blood) the Scripture vnderstandeth all the benefits of Christ ; but, for the most part, maketh mention of that onely, because it hath as it were the first and chiefe place.

Theoph. Let vs goe forward. What vnderstandest thou by that spirituall food, which thou saidst came by the eating of Christs body, and drinking his blood ?

Our spiritu-
all food in
the supper.

Mat. First, peace of conscience : namely, because wee are more & more assured of the forgiuenesse of our sinnes promised by Baptisme. Secondly, the daily growth and increase of the new man, begun in vs in our Baptisme, so as we haue power giuen vs to serue God better, and to resist the temptations that are wont to call vs away from his obedience : whereupon followeth an effect of this spirituall food ; namely, that we are confirmed daily in the hope of eternall life. And by these things appeareth that which I haue said of the difference of the Sacraments ; to wit, that Baptisme doth testifie the beginning of our partaking with Christ and his benefits, and the Supper the continuance and increase thereof.

Theoph. Now let vs come to the commandement and promise of this Sacrament.

Mat. Both be added, presently after the words of institution : *Take, eat, drinke you all of this, doe this in remembrance of me.* Loc, there is the commandement : then the promise ; *This is my body, This is my blood.* For the meaning of these words is as much, as if Christ had said ; This bread and this wine doe so represent vnto you my bodie and blood, that they assure you, receiuing the visible signes, to bee indeede partakers of those things that bee signified by them ; namely, of my body and blood.

Theoph. But the words of Christ seeme not to haue that meaning ;

meaning; but rather that the bread and wine are transubstantiated or turned into his body and blood.

Mat. The words themselves cannot beare it. For if Christ meant to haue signified that, hee would haue said thus, Let this be made my body, or let it be changed into my body.

Theoph. What then were the meaning of Christs words, if they were to bee expounded according to the letter, as they say? The exposition of Christs words.

Mat. They should rather signifie, that his bodie and blood were changed into bread and wine. For if any saw the pillar of salt, whereinto *Lots* wife was turned, out of all doubt he would say; This thing, that is, this pillar of salt is *Lots* wife; that he might declare that she was turned into that pillar: and such as heard those words, would take them in that sense.

Theo. I perceiue indeed that those words if they were to be expounded literally, doe properly signifie as thou saiest. Howbeit, that sense agreeth not to the words of Christ.

Mat. Thou thinkest rightly: and that former agreeth nothing more, namely, whereon transubstantiation is builded. which indeed the very words doe not beare: yea rather out of it foure absurdities doe follow.

Theoph. Rehearse them.

Mat. 1. First, if the bread and wine be turned into the body and blood of Christ, there shall be no signes in the holy Supper; and therefore it shall not bee a Sacrament: which indeed cannot be without a visible signe.

2. Secondly, Christs blood shall be separated from his body: which is most absurd, and impossible to be. Moreover, the body of Christ should bee infinite: and therefore he should not be a very man; neither should he haue truly ascended into heauen. By which opinion, the chiefe points of our faith should be ouerthrowen.

Theoph. Some do obiekt that Christs body is now glorified, and at one and the same time may be in diuers places.

Mat. This obiection is vaine. For, when Christ instituted the Supper, his body was not glorified. Adde hereunto that the glorification hath not taken from it the nature of a true body; but hath taken away the infirmitie and weaknesse

A confutation of the absurdities following vpon popish transubstantiation.

Act. 3. 21.

Act. 1. 11.

ness of it: which was very well obserued of one of the Fathers. For this cause *Peter* saith; The heauen must hold him, vntill the time of the repairing of all things. And the Angels, in another place; So shall hee come, as you haue seene him goe into heauen.

Theoph. Shew the fourth absurditie.

* *Ioh.* 9. 54.

Against those, who say, the reprobate, in the supper be partakers of Christs body and blood.

1. *Co.* 11. 29.

Mat. It is this; that the wicked and hypocrites, comming to the Supper, should truly partake of the body and blood of Christ: which verily were nothing else but to ioinc God and Sathan together. Moreouer, contrary vnto that which the Scripture expressly teacheth, the vnbeleeuers should be saued. For Christ affirmeth, * Whosoever eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath euerlasting life.

Theoph. But Christ vnderstandeth those, which eat his flesh, and drinke his blood, worthily. For the Apostle saith, He that eateth this bread, and drinketh this cup vnworthily, eateth and drinketh to himselfe damnation.

1. *Ioh.* 5. 12.

Mat. The Apostle saith not, whoso eateth the body of Christ, and drinketh the blood of Christ vnworthily, but he that eateth the bread and drinketh the cup. For Christ should offer his body to be prophaned, if he made the vnworthy partakers of it. Moreouer, his gifts be inseparably ioined with his person: and therefore it is impossible, that any should communicate with his body, but the same also must be partakers of all his benefits, and euen of euerlasting life. For this cause *John* saith; He that hath the Sonne, hath life: He that hath not the Sonne of God, hath not life. Those foure absurdities, reckened vp by vs, doe most manifestly ouerthrow the opinion of transubstantiation: which is also disproued by experience it selfe; forasmuch as the bread and wine of the Supper, if they be kept long, doe corrupt. Whereupon it is plaine, that their substance is not changed.

Th. I do indeed perceiue, that the words of Christ do not establish transubstantiation, or the turning of the signes into the things signified: both because the words themselues cannot beare it; & especially in this, that most grosse absurdities do follow thereupon. But, by what arguments can you prooue, that the exposition, brought by you, doth express the sense of Christs words, & y^e this was his meaning?

Mat.

Mat. Seeing there must be an exposition of them, it is not to be doubted, but it ought to be true & proper; being such as may bee confirmed by the testimonie of the holy Scripture, and wherupon no absurdity followeth. But, that which I haue brought is such: therefore it is true & proper.

Theoph. If you proue these two points, you shall doubtlesse ouercome.

Mat. First, that exposition is confirmed by the testimonie of the holy Scripture. For, *Paul* thus expoundeth the words of Christ, instituting the Supper; The cup of blessing, which wee blesse, is it not the Communion of the blood of Christ? The bread, which we breake, is it not the Communion of the body of Christ? Which words do indeede signifie no other thing, but that wee should vnderstand the bread and wine to be most certaine signes of our communion and fellowship with Christs body and blood. And that doth altogether agree with my exposition. Moreover, these words, *This is my body*, are to haue the like exposition with these, *This is my blood*: But *Luke* expoundeth them thus; This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. The same exposition also did *Paul* follow, repeating the words of the institution. And this manner of speech can admit no other exposition (without wresting the words) than this, That the wine offered in the cup is a most sure pledge of the couenant, which God hath made with vs by the pretious blood of Christ. The same therefore is to be said of y bread; namely, that it is a most sure pledge of the vnion which we haue with the body of Christ.

Theoph. Concerning the first thing required in a true interpretation, thou hast satisfied mee: let vs now come to the other.

Mat. Concerning the other, I affirmed that the exposition which I brought, had no absurditie in it. For it hindereth not, but that we may truly eat the body of Christ and drinke his blood, to our saluation. Yea, the foure absurdities, which I spake of euen now, be auoided.

For, the signes retaine their owne nature.

The blood of Christ is not separated from his body.

The truth of his humanitie, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of the Father remaineth safe.

Q 2

Finally,

In a true exposition of Christs words, in the Supper, two things required.

1. Testimonie of Scripture confirmeth it.

1. Co. 10. 16.

Luk. 22. 20.

1. Co. 11. 25.

2. No absurdity ensueth of it.

Why Christ
vsed those
words, and
no other, in
the institu-
tion of the
Supper.

The confir-
mation of
the former
interpreta-
tion.

Gen. 17. 9.
10. 11.

Exo. 12. 11.

1. Cor. 10. 4.

Finally, the vnbelecuers are not partakers of his body and blood.

Theoph. If that were the meaning of Christ, why did hee not expresse it in plainer words and lesse doubtfull?

Mat. He could not expresse that promise, in fewer and more significant words. For, if he had said, This is a pledge or signe of my body, there had beene no promise. It had therefore beene necessary for him, to haue vsed long circumstance of words, after this manner; I auouch, that this bread and this wine doe so represent vnto you my body and bloud, that as often as ye receiue these visible signes, yee shal be truely and indeed partakers of the things, wherof they be signes. But this kind of speech had not beene of such force and weight, as that is which he vseth; *This is my blood*: for it comprehended all those things vnder it; but with a greater Maiestie. And for this cause the holy Ghost vsed a like kind of speech in all the Sacraments of the olde Testament: to wit, in that it giueth the name of the thing signified to the signes themselues; to teach vs that the worthy receiuers be truely partakers of the thing signified.

Theoph. Declare that vnto me particularly, in some Sacraments of the old Church.

Mat. First, God meaning to assure *Abraham* and his posteritie, that circumcision was vnto them a most certaine signe that they were reckened in his couenant, calleth it his couenant. The same also saith *Moses* of the Sacrament of the Passeouer. For he calleth it the Lords Passeouer, to giue them to vnderstand, that it was a most certaine token of the good will of God. Whereof the Israelites had experience when the Angell destroyed the first borne of the *Ægyptians*, and passed ouer their houses without touching them, whereof the Passeouer was a Sacrament.

Theoph. Indeed these kinds of speaking doe come somewhat neere to the words of Christ vsed in the institution of the holy Supper. But I demand; if there bee any altogether like vnto them, and that haue the same meaning with that, which thou hast alledged?

Mat. There be. For the Apostle, speaking of the Sacraments which the Fathers vsed in the wildernesse, saith; that the rock, that is, the wyater, which *Moses* had (not with-
out

out miracle) brought out of stone, was Christ: to teach that it was vnto them a most effectuall Sacrament of the Communion and fellowship which they had with Christ. For the same Apostle affirmeth; that the fathers did eate the same spirituall meat with vs, and dranke the same spirituall drinke. Lo therefore a manner of speech altogether like to that which Christ vsed in the institution of the Supper; and which hath the same interpretation with that which I brought a little before. Yea and that more is, there is vse of this kinde of speech, not onely in the Scripture, but also in our common talke. For, if a king will forgieue an offender the punishment of his faults, deliuering vnto him his letters patents, confirmed by his handwriting & seale, he will say; Behold thy pardon. And yet he meaneth not, that the letters patents be his pardon, but onely a certaine testimonie of his pardon. And this similitude very excellently agreeth with the Sacraments; which bee, as it were, seales of the word: as the Apostle testifieth, speaking of circumcision. For hee calleth it the seale of the righteousness of faith.

Rom. 4. 11.

Theoph. I doe now see, that thy interpretation doth expresse the true meaning of Christs words. I do also grant, that, by those words, Christ assureth vs, that we are as verily partakers of his body and blood, as we do receiue the bread and wine. But how can that be? vnderstandest thou that his bodie is shut vp or inclosed in the bread, and his blood in the wine?

Against the error of consubstantiation.

Mat. At no hand. For the words themselves cannot any way beare it. For, Christ must then haue said; My body is with this bread, and my blood is with this wine.

Secondly, wee should hold a carnall eating: which would lead vs to the three latter absurdities, reckened vp by vs, when we spake of transubstantiation; namely, that the blood of Christ should be seuered from his body; that his body should be infinite: and, finally, that the wicked, comming to the Supper, should communicate with the body and blood of Christ, and consequently obtaine everlasting life. Moreouer, Christ himselfe doth teach the contrary. For vnto his Disciples, iudging the speech which he had of eating his body, to be hard, hee answereth thus;

Q 3

It

Iohn. 6. 63.

Of the eating
of Christs bo-
dy and drink-
ing his blood.

It is the spirit that giueth life, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I speake vnto you, are spirit and life. By which words, he declareth most euidently, that hee speaketh not of any carnall, but of a spirituall eating.

Theoph. You haue affirmed before, that Christ, in that place did not speake of the eating which is in the Supper: but of that which is spiritually by faith.

Mat. As the Scripture doth set before vs one Christ, so it sheweth one way, how to eate his flesh and drinke his blood (that is, wherby we may be made one with him; that so wee may bee partakers of all his benefits): and this is, spiritually by faith. Seeing therefore this spirituall eating is abundantly sufficient to our saluation, and is grounded vpon the word of God, it ouerthroweth that carnall eating, which men by the example of the Capernaïtes haue deuised to themselves: from the which also (if it could be) there were no other profit to bee looked for, than that which we receiue by spirituall eating.

Therefore, albeit Christ, in that place, speaketh not of the Sacramentall eating, but of that, which is by receiuing the word in faith: neuerthelesse, it both may and ought to be referred vnto that; because it is one and the same eating. And therefore whatsoeuer is saide of the one, must necessarily agree to the other. And doubtlesse, seeing the question is of the food of our soules, which is spirituall, and the meat is spirituall; it followeth of necessity, that the eating is spirituall; euen as we cannot nourish our bodies, except earthly food bee visibly and sensibly eaten, for the preseruatiō of this life.

Theoph. What doest thou properly vnderstand, by spirituall eating?

How we that
bee in the
earth, be par-
takers of
Christ his
body which
is in heauen.

Mat. That Christ, although (concerning his humane nature) he goe not out of the heauens, doth yet by the power of the holy Ghost communicate vnto vs his body and blood, and that by faith: which is in stead of a spirituall hand and mouth, by which we receiue him, and apply him vnto vs; as hath bene more at large declared of vs, in the Chapter of faith. And this is the spirituall eating of Christ by faith, being opposite to the carnall eating: which some haue dreamed to bee with the bodily mouth; so that the

very

very substance of the body and blood of Christ is eaten with it: which is a most absurd fiction. And yet no maruel though some haue fallen into it: for, as the spirituall man, when he heareth that the body of Christ is to be eaten, and his blood to be drunken, vnderstandeth it (according to his spirituall hunger and thirst) spiritually; & therefore prepareth his heart by faith: so, contrariwise, the carnall man hath no other than carnall cogitations in all this businesse; and therefore prepareth the mouth of his body, to deuoure Christ. But the saying of *Austin* is notable, Why dost thou make ready thy teeth & belly? belecue, and thou hast eaten.

Theoph. But how can it be, that Christ, which is in heauen, should truly communicate his body vnto vs, that bee conuersant vpon the earth?

Mat. That ought not to seeme maruellous vnto vs: for if the Sun, being a creature without life, do by his beames communicate the effect and power of it vnto vs that liue vpon the earth; by a far stronger reason may Christ, which is the Sunne of righteousness, by the immeasurable power of the Holy Ghost, truly make vs partakers of his body, in the Supper; to whom it is no harder to ioine together things farre distant asunder, than those that be most nigh. Which indeed appeareth euen by this, that it ioineth together all the faithfull (albeit they bee scattered heere and there) into one body, whereof Christ is the head. That is also shadowed in the Supper: for the Apostle saith, Wee which are many, are one body: for all of vs are partakers of one bread.

I. Cor. 10. 17

Theoph. But some obiekt, that if in the supper of the Lord we do only spiritually and by faith communicate with the body of Christ, there is no great profit of it, seeing that is daily fulfilled in vs, by the ministerie of the word receiued by faith.

An obiection
against spiri-
tual eating.

Mat. It followeth not. For there bee diuers helpes ordained of God to the same end; namely, to procure or further our saluation, in his Son, through the Holy Ghost, euen as a good Physitian procureth the health of the Patient committed to his trust, by sundry meanes. Wherefore although by receiuing the word in faith, Christ be already spiritually eaten of vs: yet neuerthelesse this is more and

more performed in the Supper : through the which the Lord so worketh according to his promise, and so furnisheth vs with the power of the holy Ghost, that our hearts be more abundantly inflamed with his loue, and confirmed in the hope of euerlastiug life.

Theoph. Seeing then it is certain, that we are not otherwise partakers of Christ in the Supper, than spiritually and by faith ; it followeth, that all they which come to it without faith, haue no fruit or benefit by it.

Mat. That indeed is most true. For, by their vnbeleefe they refuse Christ, whom God offered to them in the Supper. Wherefore, they be partakers only of the signes, and that to their condemnation : seeing that (so much as in them is) they profane and vnhalloiw that most holy spirituall banquet, prouided of God for his children ; whiles they come vnto it not furnished with that most pretious garment, namely, faith: whereby wee are iustified before God, made the sonnes of God, and be accounted worthy to sit downe at his table. For this cause the Apostle commandeth, that euery one should proue himselfe, and so eat of that bread, and drinke of that cup.

1. Cor. 11. 28

Theoph. What is the way wherby a man ought to proue himselfe ?

Mat. Let him trie himselfe, & see whether he haue faith: which shall be easie to perceiue by repentance, as it hath been said of vs in the proper place. Whosoever therefore is not any way touched with repentance, is altogether unworthy to be admitted to the Supper of the Lord.

Theoph. But what thinkest thou of him, that hath some feeling of repentance, though it be very little?

Mat. If it be so little, that it shew not it selfe by returning to God, and by amendment of life, it ought to be suspected. For, true repentance, albeit it be weake, doth alwaies discover it selfe by some outward workes.

In the meane time, it is not to bee doubted, but that as our faith is alwaies very weake, so it standeth with our repentance. And this doubtlesse is so, euen in the most regenerate, although diuersly ; for in some it is more, in others it is lesse. Notwithstanding, it is so farre off, that this weakenesse should driue vs from the holy Supper, that it ought

ought rather to spurre vs forward to come vnto it, that by it wee may be strengthened in faith and repentance; euen as the sicke man, the weaker hee knoweth himselfe to be, should so much the more diligently seeke for meat, both to receiue nourishment thereby, and to repaire his strength. Therefore they onely bee vnworthy to come to the Lords Supper, who delight in their sins, and goe on in them. For, seeing they bee dead in sinne, they neither are worthie, nor haue further vse of this spirituall sustenance.

Theoph. But if such men come to the Supper, what thinke you is to be done?

Mat. If their vnworthinesse be secret and hidden, they ought to be left to the iudgement of God, who will one day take vengeance vpon them: but if it be knowen, they ought (by order of ecclesiasticall discipline) to be put backe from it.

Theoph. What call you Ecclesiasticall discipline?

Mat. The order instituted by God in the Church, specially for two ends. The first is, that the Ministerie may be upheld, that (as *Paul* saith) all things may be done in the Church decently and in order. Also, that vpon appointed daies and at certain times Sermons may be made, and the Sacraments administred, and with due reuerence frequented and resorted vnto, by such as haue ioined and betaken themselues to the Christian Church. The other end is, that the conuersation and doctrine of euery one may bee looked into; that such as haue given offence may be corrected and dealt with, according to the degrees prescribed by Christ: yea, if they bee stubborne, to be at length excommunicated, that is, cut off from the bodie of the Church; lest God himselfe be slandered, and the flocke (by their euill example) infected. Moreouer, that (if it be possible) they may (as *Paul* teacheth) by that shame, be called to repentance.

Ecclesiasticall
discipline.
1. Cor. 14.40

*Mat. 18.15.
16.17.*

Theoph. Of whom ought that Ecclesiasticall discipline to be exercised?

Mat. Of the Pastors of the Church, to whom are to be adioined certaine Seniors or Ancients for this end, as necessitie shall require, chosen of the Church.

T N E

THE SUMME OF ALL
Christian Religion:
Declared in a threefold method
or order.

THEOPHILVS.

THankes be to God, from whom we haue receiued this benefit, that we haue happily in my iudgement handled all the parts of Christian Religion. Now I would that thou shouldest draw the chiefe heads of it into a short sum, before we make an end of this our disputation.

Mat. That abridgement or Breuiary may be done in a triple or threefold method: so as the first may be profitable to the instruction of the godly; the other to their comfort; & the third to consist of both, by making an opposition or contrarietie of true religion, with all other religions.

Theoph. Goe to therefore, declare the first.

Mat. It shall declare the order of the whole booke: which indeed may be brought to fve heads or principall points: the dependencie, coherence, or lincking together whereof sheweth, what certaintie and truth is in euery one of them, and so in all Christian Religion, in such sort as it hath beene laid foorth by vs.

Theoph. Rehearse those chiefe points.

Mat. The first intreaterk of God.

The second of man.

The third of Christ.

The fourth of faith.

The fift of the Holy Ghost.

Theoph. It shall be so much the more easie to remember them, because ech of them may be applied to ech finger of the hand. Declare them therefore to me in order, and shew me the coherence and agreement which thou didst attribute vnto them.

Mat. First, we must hold this principle, that God (seeing he is perfectly iust, and perfectly mercifull) doth not only shew his mercie, but doth also declare his iustice.

This foundation being laid, it followeth, that man (who

The first
Epitome.

God.

Man.

of

of his owne nature is a wretched sinner) cannot be saued frō eternall death, which he hath deserued; except he haue some fit meane, whereby the perfect iustice of God may be satisfied. But there can be found no other meane, besides the merit of Christs death. For by it the wrath of God being appeased, there is a way made for vs vnto his mercy, & therefore vnto eternall life. But Christ shall profite vs nothing, except we be members of his body, & so bee partakers of his benefits. And both of these we obtaine by faith: which indeed sheweth it selfe by good works: and namely by prayer. Finally, the holy Ghost worketh this faith in the harts of the godly, by the preaching of the word, & confirmeth & keepeth it, as wel by that preaching as by the vse of the sacraments, till at length he bring vs to euerlasting life.

Christ.

Faith.

The holy Ghost.

Theoph. This is an excellent Breuiarie: for, in most few words and fit order, it containeth the summe of Christian doctrine, for the instruction of the godly. Now therefore let vs come to the other: which thou saidst was profitable for the comfort of the faithfull.

The second Epitome.

Mat. That shall be set out, in an order diuers from the former: but it may be also brought into fve heads.

1. The first is of repentance.
2. The second of faith.
3. The third of Christ.
4. The fourth of God.
5. The fift of eternall life.

And these also be ioyned together between themselves by a most close coherence and neere band, to assure the godly of their saluation.

Theoph. Shew me that band, or coherence.

Mat. First, whosoever doth truely repent (and that is easily perceiued, namely, when we serue God frō the hart) hee hath faith. But whosoever hath faith, is partaker of Christ and his benefits. And againe, whosoever is partaker of Christ and his benefits, is iustified, and made the childe of God. But whosoever is iustified and made the childe of God, shall be deliuered from condemnation, & made partaker of eternall life. Whereupon it followeth, that hee, which by good works is assured of his repentance, shall neuer perish; but haue life euerlasting. And those fve stairs

Repentance.

Faith.

Christ.

Eternall life.

or

or steps may be in stead of a ladder, by the which we may climbe vp euen into heauen, to vnderstand certainly whether our names be written in the booke of life, or not: but the first only is hard.

Theoph. Why so?

Mat. Because there is no little labour to be bestowed in the denial of sinne, that we may serue God from the heart: but when a man by the grace of God hath profited so far, there is very little labour behinde. From hence it is, that sometimes the Scripture attributeth our saluation vnto works, namely, to note vnto vs this order. As, when hee saith: God will giue to euery one according to his works. They shall come foorth that haue done well, to the resurrection of life. Whereunto also that ought to be referred, which is said in another place; Blessed are they that walke in the Law of the Lord.

Theoph. There is one doubt behinde within me, which seemeth to let that the godly cannot be sure of their saluation: namely, because thereunto is required, that they be sure of perseuerance and continuing to the end; without which, Christ affirmeth that none can be saued. Neuertheless, there be many found, which in shew begin happily, yea also haue long continued in the knowledge and confession of the truth; who notwithstanding doe so fall from it, that they neuer returne.

Mat. It is true indeed, that perseuerance is necessarie to saluation: howbeit, the Apostle affirmeth, that he which hath begun the good worke in vs, will perfect the same euen vnto the day of Christ; that is, to the end of the battell. And concerning them that fall away, the words of the Apostle be manifest; They went out from vs, but they were not of vs; for if they had been of vs, they should haue continued with vs. But this is done, that it might appeare, they all were not of vs. Moreouer, they be those of whom Christ speaketh, when hee saith; They which receiued the seede (that is, the doctrine of the truth of the Gospel) in stony ground, are they which heare the word, and straightway receiue it with ioy; but they haue no root in themselves, but are for a time; and when trouble or persecution ariseth for the words sake, they are by and by offended

Rom 2.6.

Joh. 5. 29.

Psal. 119. 1.

Phil. 1. 6.

1. Joh. 2. 19.

Mat. 13. 21.

22.

offended. But they, which receiued the seede amongst thornes, are such as heare the Word; but the cares of this world, and the deceitfulnesse of riches choake the Word, and it is made vnfruitfull.

Theoph. This therefore is your meaning; that they which so fall from the profession of the Gospell, that they neuer retorne againe, did neuer truly beleue the Gospell: although, for a time, they did in outward shew make profession of it.

Mat. You thinke right. For, true faith is seated in the heart, and there taketh root by the effectuall working of the Holy Ghost: which he bestoweth not vpon any, but those that be chosen of God, in Iesus Christ, vnto saluation. And, by this meanes, hee openeth vnto vs the counsell of God (which wee otherwise know not) concerning sauing vs. Whosoeuer therefore, by their true repentance, be assured of their faith, ought not to make doubt either of perseuerance, or of eternall life.

Theoph. You haue touched a doctrine, which to some seemeth difficult and hard. Neuerthelesse, I would wee might speake a little of it. For, I account it among those things, which the more deeply they bee searched into, the more they be obscured and darkned. First, shew me what is the foundation of it.

Mat. First, it may be gathered out of the whole Christian doctrine; but especially out of the doctrine of iustification by faith, & of regeneration; by which we are taught, that our saluation is freely bestowed vpon vs in Iesus Christ, and that it cannot spring from our selues. Seeing therefore God bestoweth not so great a benefit vpon euery one, it followeth necessarily, that they which obtaine it were chosen of God himselfe, according to the good pleasure of his will; and therefore that the eternall election of God cannot be taken away, but that together with it the principall foundations of Christian Religion, shal be ouerthrowen, and our saluation made void.

Theoph. Is there not some expresse testimonie of it in the Scripture?

Mat. There is: and not onely one, but more; and those most plaine. Among the which, the words of Paul, writing

Of the eternall election of God.

By what doctines it is proued.

Prooued by testimony of Scripture.

Eph. 1 4.9.
13.14.

to the Ephesians, bee the chiefe ; God hath chosen vs in Christ, before the foundations of the world were laid : making knowne vnto vs the mysterie of his will according to his good pleasure, which hee had purposed in himselfe. And we are sealed with that holy spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance.

Theoph. A few words indeed : but such, whereby the Apostle bringeth great light to this doctrine. For it is made the easier by the distinction which he useth, namely according to the persons of the Trinitie, whiles hee attributeth the beginning or foundation of it to the Father, the matter to the Son, and the manifesting of it to the holy Ghost.

Mat. You iudge rightly : And so indeede is that doctrine to be considered, to our edification & comfort. For they that looke to it as it were lying hid in the counsell of God, reape nothing by it, but trouble of mind, and vexation of conscience. For they doe, as if one, to see the better, should fix his eies vpon the globe of the Sunne : by the beholding of which light, it is not to be doubted, but his eies would wax dim. Who, if he looked vpon that light in the Sunne beames, might haue vse of it, and see all things offered to his sight, and how & what way to direct his steps. Likewise also this doctrine, when it is considered in Christ in whom wee are chosen, and wee seeke for in our selues the testimonie which the holy Ghost yeeldeth vs by our effectuall calling, doth then affoord vs exceeding comfort, and assureth vs of our saluation, otherwise doubtfull and vnknowne vnto vs.

Of the calling of the elect.

Theoph. What meane you by that effectuall calling, whereby you say, that wee are by the holy Ghost assured of our election ?

Mat. I called it so, to put a difference betweene the true calling of the faithfull, & the false ; which is alwaies weake and vnprofitable. For they which are called by the latter, will not heare the voice of God, or, if they heare it, yet are vnwilling to draw neere vnto him ; or, if they draw neere, it is with a double and hypocritical heart ; and not long after, they fall from him. But they that bee called with the other, are enlightened by the holy Ghost, so as the word of God entreth into their hearts, they draw neere to God,
and

and follow him with obedience of faith. And such kinde of calling as this, is alwaies ioined with election : for it is the iudge and declarer of it.

Theoph. But that effectuall calling seemeth to be nothing else, but the regeneration, which the holy Ghost worketh in vs, whereof we haue spoken before.

Mat. Thou saiest true. For by it he openeth our eares, to heare the voice of God, that calleth vs : Hee lighteneth the eies of our minde, to know him in Christ Iesus : Hee disposeth our hearts, to beleue his doctrine, to embrace it in true faith, confesse it, and follow it : He confirmeth our will, to loue and feare him : and so to keepe our selues in the reuerence and worship of his maiestie.

Theoph. Therefore whosoever is assured of his effectuall calling, by the fruit of regeneration, hee ought not to doubt of his election and saluation.

Mat. He ought not ? Nay, contrariwise, he ought to bee sure of it : which also wee professe in the last article of the Creed, when we say, I beleue the life euerlasting. For by it wee not onely vnderstand, that wee beleue there is an euerlasting life ; but that we are assured, that we our selues shall one day bee partakers of it. And that article is set at the end of the Creed, as a necessarie consequence vpon the things going before ; but especially of the article concerning the holy Ghost, from whom wee haue that assurance. That also doth the Lord confirme vnto vs, both by the ministerie of the word, whereby hee assureth the penitent of the forgiuenesse of their sinnes ; and also by the Sacraments, which be as scales and pledges of that loue wherewith the Father loueth vs in Christ.

Theoph. Doth not that assurance of our election and saluation, which thou art about to perswade the faithfull of, make them slothfull to good workes ?

Mat. How can that bee ? seeing it is certaine, that our election & saluation are confirmed by good works : without which, as hath beene said, it can no way stand. For which cause, *Peter* thus warneth vs ; Wherefore, brethren, giue diligence to make your calling and election sure. For, if you do these things, you shall neuer fall. Moreouer, the holy Ghost, which sealeth that assurance in our hearts, cannot

Of regeneration.

Of the assurance of saluation.

The assurance of saluation is confirmed by sanctification begun.
1. Pet. 1. 10.

1. John 3.9.

not dwell in vs, but that also it will doe good works in vs. For this cause, *Iohn* saith, Whosoever is borne of God sinneth not; because his seed remaineth in him: neither can he sinne, because hee is borne of God; that is, hee cannot so giue himselfe ouer to sinne, as to continue in it: seeing the holy Ghost hath raised him vp by true repentance.

Theoph. The second Epitome bringeth no lesse comfort to the mindes of the godly, than the first did instruction. For by it, both the conscience is appeased, and the minde comforted in a most certaine hope and assurance of eternall saluation. Now the third is behinde: which thou saidst consisted of both.

The third Epitome.

Mat. It containeth an Antithesis, or contrarietie, of Christian Religion with all other. For, in the difference betweene them, a faithfull man shall see as it were a new Breuiarie of the Christian doctrine: which indeed shall be both to his comfort and instruction.

Theoph. Let vs therefore consider that difference.

Mat. It standeth chiefly in five heads, or principall points.

1. First, that Christian Religion maketh all the chiefe points of the doctrine of it, to agree with the nature of the true God, in the knowledge of whom it strengtheneth and keepeth the godly.

2. The other is, that it settleth and establisheth the glorie of God, in the saluation of men: and so the godly are more and more confirmed in the certaintie of their saluation.

3. The third, that it ioineth good works with our saluation, by a most nere band (although it be no way grounded vpon them) but yet so, that the faithfull take no matter of boasting out of them.

4. The fourth, that it openeth an entrance for vs vnto God, to craue of him all things necessary.

5. The fift, that it yeeldeth to the godly, matter of patience in aduersity, and assurance in dangers. These be the true notes of Christian Religion, which indeede all other religions doe vtterly ouerthrow; because they admit not Christ, or else doe only receiue him in part.

Theoph. We are therefore to weigh these notes; that we may

may shew them to be established of true religion, & overthrowen of the rest. Let vs therefore begin at the first : I would hane you declare vnto me, how it keepeth the faithful in the knowledge of the true God.

Mat. It doth specially appeare by this, that it maketh his perfect iustice to agree with his perfect mercy. I say, his perfect iustice, inasmuch as it setteth before our eyes, no other way to satisfie it, but the infinite merit of Christ, his Sonne : wherein also his perfect mercy is manifested vnto vs, in that (of his meere grace and fauour) he gaue him to the most shamefull death of the Crosse, to be our redemption : as also, that, for his sake, he giueth vs freely euerlasting life; hauing no respect to our works, For this cause *Paul* calleth Christ the image of the inuisible God. In which words he sheweth, that God cannot be knowen, so as his perfect righteousness should agree with his most perfect mercy, but in Iesus Christ alone. Whereunto also ought to bee applied the words of Christ, vnto *Philip*, *Philip*, he that seeth me, seeth the Father.

Theoph. It remaineth, that you proue all other Religions to overthrow this foundation.

Mat. I will doe that with a very little labour. For this is common to them all, to say, that men, by humane works and inuentions, may satisfie the iudgement of God : and so they doe overthrow his perfect righteousness, which they thinke they can satisfie with vaine desires; by the which he is displeased. Moreouer, that men, by their works bee able to deserue eternall life. But, whiles they set vp their owne righteousness, thereby to obtaine saluation, either in whole, or in part, they overthrow the perfect mercy of God : so as they worship an Idoll instead of the true God. Whereupon is that saying of *Paul*; The heathen be without God in the world. For as *Iohn* saith, Whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. And againe, Christ affirmeth; No man commeth to the Father but by me.

Theoph. Let vs come to the other difference : and let vs see how true Religion establisheth the glory of God, in the saluation of men; and how it assureth them of saluation.

Mat. That is done by the same doctrine : namely, be-

R

cause

Christian religion keepeth the faithful in the knowledge of the true God.

Col. 1. 15.

Iohn. 1. 4. 9.

False religions overthrow the knowledge of the true God.

Ephes. 2. 12.

1. Iohn 2. 23.

Iohn. 14. 6.

Christian religion assureth men of their saluation.

Ephes. 2. 9.

Ephes. 1. 5.

Iohn 10. 27.

Iohn 5. 24.

Roma. 8. 36.

False Religions overthrow the glory of God.

cause it teacheth, that we haue eternall life of the meere grace of God, without any respect to our works. For, by this meanes, all occasion of glorying is taken from men, and is giuen vnto God alone: which the Apostle witnesseth. For, after that he hath taught, that wee are saued by grace, through faith, and that not of our selues; it is the gift of God, not of works: hee presently addeth; lest any should boast. And, in another place, he saith; Hee hath adopted, or taken vs to be his children, through Iesus Christ according to the good pleasure of his will. But, whatsoever serueth to set forth the glory of God, is a true and sound foundation of our saluation. For, seeing it leaneth vpon the euerlasting and vchangeable good pleasure of God in Christ, it is so sure to those that by true faith bee made his members, that it can neuer be ouerthrowen; euen as Christ himselfe witnesseth, in these words; My sheepe heare my voice, and I know them, and they follow mee, and I giue vnto them eternall life; neither shall they perish for euer, neither shall any take them out of my hand. My Father which gaue them to mee, is greater than all: neither can any take them out of my Fathers hand. And for this cause he saith in another place; He that beleeueth in him that sent mee, hath euerlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but hath passed from death, to life. Which things being so, the faithfull may reioyce, with *Paul*, in these words; I am perswaded, that neither life nor death, neither Angels nor Principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, neither height, nor depth, nor any other creature can bee able to separate me from the loue of God, which is in Christ Iesus our Lord.

Theoph. It is now thy part to shew that this fundamentall point is ouerthrowen of other Religions.

Mat. And this also shall be done most easily. For they overthrow the glory of God, and set vp the glory of man, in that they giue vnto men the glory of their owne saluation. Yea, rather, their own saluation is also by this means ouerthrowen: seeing that it leaneth vpon so weake a foundation, as their owne good works & merits. Whereof their own conscience is a witnesse. For, although they deceiue themselves

themselves with counterfeiting, it is continually in doubt, and troubled with distrust; but especially when they perceive death to draw neere vnto them. For then they are so disquieted, that they cannot tell whither to turne them.

Theoph. Yea, but the faithfull themselves be sometimes appalled and beaten downe with the horror of death, and of Gods iudgement, no lesse then are the wicked.

Mat. I deny not, but that (in some sort) they be oftentimes beaten downe with it; namely, when they set before their eies the infinit number of their sins, and the grievousnes of them, together with the depth of Gods most perfect iustice: neuertheles, when they cast their eies vpon Christ crucified for them; they be presently deliuered from that feare, in the which the wicked be indeed swallowed vp; so that they are not at all holpen by the merits of Christ. The godly therefore, in that combat may be compared with a man vpon the top of a tower, whose foundation and wals are most strong. For if he looke downeward he is stricken with some sodden fear: from the which he is presently deliuered, when he perceiue the strength of the building. But the wicked are like vnto one on the top of a tower; but such a one, as threatneth falling, yea rather is shaken with the winds, which indeed presently falleth.

Theoph. Thou hast also sufficiently satisfied me concerning this difference. Let vs come to the third.

Mat. It standeth herein; That good Works bee ioyned with our saluation by a most neere bond; although it doe no way hang vpon them: as it hath beene declared of vs before in the Chapter of Works. For, it cannot by any other meanes be, that we should be partakers of Christ to the obtaining of saluation, but by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in vs: by the which we are not only made fit to doe well; but also kept in the feare of God, so as we runne not headlong into sins. Notwithstanding, although the godly do good works, yet can they haue no cause from them to boast. For it is God that worketh in vs, both to will and to performe, according to his good pleasure. Wherefore they altogether be referred to the glory of God as also our saluation it selfe is; whereof they be most certaine markes.

True religion
containeth
the doctrine
and practise
of good
works.

Phil. 2. 13.

False religions be against those that be indeed good works.

True religion doth purely call vpon the true God, through the only mediator: but the false do farre otherwise.

Theo. Now proue, that good works bee destroyed, by false Religions. For they brag, that these are established by them; and doe say that we destroy them.

Mat. I deny not, but that false Religions doe establish superstitious works; which indeed be reiected of vs; but, good works they destroy. For, they so busie their followers and schollers, in the obseruation of mens precepts, that they set light by, and despise Gods commandements: as experience doth abundantly witnesse. Whereof this seemeth to be the chiefeft cause; namely, that the wicked, to performe their works, doe trust to their owne free-will, that is, to their naturall strength (which, in very deed, is none at all); and so they goe away from Christ: who neuerthelesse saith; As the branch cannot beare fruit of it selfe, that is, except it abide in the Vine: so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. For, without me ye can do nothing.

Theop. Declare the fourth difference.

Mat. It may be taken from those things, which were said before of vs in the Chapter of Praier; namely, that Christ, being made ours by faith, doth continually make intercession for vs with his Father: whereupon it is, that he is mercifull vnto vs, and heareth our praiers. The wicked, contrariwise, while they come to God in their owne name or any other name beside Christs, doe effect nothing by their praiers; both because they be vnworthy to be heard, and because their intercessors are not sufficient or meete for that office: for they haue not wherewith to appease the wrath of God, most iustly kindled against him that praieith. Therefore the vngodly can neuer obtaine any thing at the hands of God; vnlesse it bee in his anger: and that doubtlesse falleth out to their condemnation.

Theoph. Declare the last difference: and withall shew, how Christian Religion ministreth to the godly matter of patience in aduersity; and, touching things to come, maketh them securely assured, and without feare.

Mat. That is done, by the doctrine of Gods prouidence: wherewith, when the godly vnderstand that all things be gouerned, although they seeme to be compassed about on euey side with all aduersities, yet doe they from
thence

thence take matter of comfort, because they know they are beloued of God; and consequently that aduersities be not sent but to their saluation: as it was at large declared by vs, in the Chapter of Faith.

For this cause, *David* did beare the railings and euill speeches of *Simei* most patiently; and commanded the souldiers to forbear to kill him: for saith he; He curseth, because God hath commanded him to curse *David*. In another place also, being most grievously oppressed of his enemies, he saith thus; I was dumbe, neither opened I my mouth: for thou O Lord diddest this. *Job* also, hauing lost his goods (which were partly destroyed by thunder, and partly taken away by the *Chaldeans*) tooke comfort of this, that the Lord had giuen, and the Lord had taken away. By the same reason also, wee are securely assured concerning things to come, for the Apostle saith; If God be with vs, who can be against vs? He that spared not his owne Son, but gaue him for vs all, how shal he not with him also freely giue vs all things? As if hee had said; Seeing God is our most mercifull father, and also omnipotent, we haue good cause to hope he will deliuer vs from all dangers, so farre forth as he knoweth it behouefull to his glory and our saluation, and will also giue helpe in our necessities. This is confirmed by the Prophet in these words; Behold, the eyes of the Lord are vpon such as feare him, which trust in his mercy, to deliuer their soules from death, and to quicken them in the time of famine.

The same Prophet also in another place warneth vs, saying; Cast thy waies vpon the Lord, and trust in him, and he will bring it to passe. But, other Religions take from men all matter of patience and confidence, whiles they teach, that the wisdom or foolishnesse of men are the causes of all things that befall vs; or doe imagine a certaine bare permission or sufferance of God, separated from his will; or else doe admit fortune.

All which things do ouerthrow the prouidence of God being the ground worke of comfort to those that be assured of their saluation. It cannot therefore otherwise be, but that the vnbeleeuers are stricken with impatience, so oft as troubles assaile them. For, it falleth out to them as to

2. Sam. 16.
10.

Psal. 39 10

Iob. 1. 21.

Rom. 8. 30.

Psal. 33. 18

Psal. 37. 5.
False religions
driue men to
impatience
and despera-
tion.

dogs which bite the stone, letting goe him that threw it. But, concerning things to come, they are alwaies euen sicke with distrust; being therewith, no doubt, continually disquieted, so as they neuer be at rest.

Theoph. You haue sufficiently satisfied me with this opposition betweene Religion, and all other false religions. But, before we end this speech, I would haue a comparison made betweene the followers of them both.

What is the
happinesse of
the godly e-
uen in this
life.

Mat. It may bee easily gathered of the former : yea rather, in most of the chiefe points, wee should haue ioined them both together. Neuerthelesse, seeing it so seemeth good vnto thee, I will handle it by it selfe, to the end it may appeare that the godly, that follow the true religion, are in far better estate, then the vngodly, foolishly giuen ouer to most fond superstitions : and that not onely in the life to come, but also in this present life, although you should reckon vp all the troubles, which we are enforced to suffer, for the profession of the Gospell.

Theoph. But how agreeth that with the saying of *Paul*? *If in this life only we beleue in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

Mat. Those words of *Paul* are not contrarie to that which we haue said of the happinesse of the godly, euen in this life. For, I speake not of a happinesse that standeth in pleasures, riches, or in any earthly commodities ; (for, in these, for the most part, the wicked goe far beyond them) but rather in spirituall graces, which God giueth vnto vs : namely, when we be assured of his loue & good will; and, that more is, of our saluation by Christ. I therefore thinke with *Paul*, That, of all men we are most miserable, if there were not hope of a better life : especially, considering the afflictions which we are constrained to suffer for the profession of the Gospell ; from the which, in the meane time, the wicked be free. But, on the other side, we of all men are most happy, when we haue before vs the assurance of the loue and good will of God, and the hope of our saluation. For, what matter is it if the wicked excell vs in riches, honour, and other commodities of this life ? seeing they be things vaine and fleeting : which also commonly bring with them more disprofit, than profit. But we, contrariwise,

erariwise, haue spirituall riches, that can neuer bee taken from vs: which also bring with them sound and true ioy, and that euerlasting. Hence it is, that *Paul* affirmeth; Godlineffe is profitable to all things: as that, which hath the promises of this present life, and of that which is to come. By which words he sheweth, that the fatherly loue of God towards his children, is manifested both in this life and in the life to come.

1. Tim. 4. 8.

Theoph. Shew me therefore, wherein that happinesse of the godly in this life standeth.

Mat. I say that it leaneth vpon foure foundations especially.

Theoph. Declare the first.

Mat. That the faithfull, being iustified by faith, haue peace with God, through Christ Iesus; through whome (saith the Apostle) wee haue, by faith, an entrance to that grace wherein we stand, and doe glory in hope of the glory of God. Whereby it commeth to passe, that death it selfe is not fearefull to vs: Whereas contrariwise, it striketh horrors into the wicked, by reason of the torment of conscience, wherewith they be continually vexed.

Rom 5. 1.
Wherein the happinesse of the godly in this life standeth, and the unhappinesse of the wicked

Theoph. Goe to the second.

Mat. That the faithfull, by Christ, being set free from the seruice of sinne, do ouercome their affections & lusts; whereunto the wicked be bondslaues. From hence is it, that whereas the godly leade an vnreprooueable and quiet life; the wicked contrariwise are tossed with sundry perturbations of the minde, because they cannot satisfie their lusts: and oftentimes they are vexed and tormented both in seeking to compasse them, and with pouerty and diseases, afterwards: sometimes also they become infamous, and are punished of the magistrate.

Theoph. Declare the two last points.

Mat. The third is this, that the godly haue alwaies an entrance to the mercy of God through Christ; and, that which more is, doe by prayers obtaine of him whatsoeuer is necessary: but the wicked are neuer heard. Finally, the godly, being assured of the good will and fauour of God through Christ, doe wholly commit themselues to his providence; and, by the power of the holy Ghost dwelling in them,

them, doe patiently beare all aduersities; yea rather doe meekely and thankfully receiue them, as at the hand of a most kinde father. The wicked contrariwise, remaine ouerwhelmed with the burthen of their afflictions: because they can neuer bee assured of the loue of God (of whose prouidence they be altogether ignorant); and therefore be destitute of the spirit of comfort, and run on either into blockish senselesnes, or else euen into desperation. Which things being so, it is not to be doubted, but that the state of the faithfull, euen in this life, is farre more happie then the state of the wicked. For this cause *Dauid* (who had more then once tried all those things which haue beene said of the godly) speaking vnto God, saith after this manner; Behold o God, our shield, and looke vpon the face of thine anointed. For one day in thy courts, is better then a thousand elsewhere: I had rather be a doore-keeper in the house of my God, then to dwell in the Tabernacles of wickednesse.

Psal. 84. 9.

The reason whereof hee presently rendreth, in these words; *Because the Lord God is the Sunne and Shield: he giueth grace and glorie: hee keepeth backe no good thing from them that walke vprightly. O Lord God of hosts, blessed is the man, that trusteth in thee.*

The difference betweene the beleeuers and vnbeleuers after this life.

Theoph. Now it remaineth, that we consider of the difference that shalbe betweene the faithfull and vnfaithfull, after this life.

Mat. It shall bee very great, insomuch that it shall farre passe that which we spake of euen now, concerning this life. For, so long as we liue vpon this earth, our happinesse lieth hidden vnder the shame of the Crosse; and the wicked on the other side, in this life, haue for the most part, all things according to their desire: for they are rich, and be in honour and fauour. But their case shall be farre otherwise, when they come to the iudgement seate of the highest Iudge. For, then, all the reproach of the godly shall be turned into euerlasting glorie: and, on the other side, the glorie of the wicked shall bee turned into euerlasting shame.

Theo. Shew the cause of this.

Mat. You might haue gathered it from our former discourse:

course : notwithstanding for memories sake, I will in few words repeate it, in this place ; which is, That, being clothed by faith with the most perfect righteousness of Christ, we shall finde the tribunall seat of God full of mercie and grace ; so as we shall be receiued into eternall glorie, together with Christ our head, the Angels, and all Saints : that so, as well of vs as of them, God may be praised, and we liue most happily for euer.

On the other side, the wicked being void of righteousness, yea rather stained with innumerable sinnes, shall finde the iudgement seat of God, seuerer : insomuch, as they shall be ouerwhelmed with the horrible wrath of his iust iudgement, and shall at length be cast into the lake of eternall fire : where shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth. Out of these things therefore you may gather, that there is no Religion woorthie of this honorable name, besides that which is grounded vpon Christ : forasmuch as all superstitions which teacheth men not to come to God, but to goe away from him, do not reconcile them to him, but more and more prouoke him to wrath ; and not onely do not bring them to saluation, but doe mislead them into euerlasting destruction.

The conclusion of the former discourse.

Theoph. Hitherto enough hath beene said of the *Antithesis*, or contrariety, betweene religion and superstitions, and the followers of both. I doe now see plainly, that the Christian Religion is the onely true Religion, and that the followers of it are onely happie and blessed, whether wee looke to this life, or that which is to come. For all other men are on euery side most miserable ; yea they are more vnhappie then the bruite beasts. which, while they liue, be free from all cares, and after death bee deliuered from all labour and paine.

Mat. That is most true. But, as the Prophet saith ; A foolish man knoweth not this : and an vnwise man vnderstandeth not this.

Psal. 92. 6.

Theoph. I am now fully satisfied, with this your holy instruction ; wherein you haue run through all the chiefe points of Christian Religion. And when I haue leasure, I will commit them to writing in order, as they were deliuered by you : that so both my selfe may bee edified and comforted.

comforted with the reading of them, and that also I may communicate them with my brethren. In the meane time I yeeld you most hartly thanks, for the paines which for my sake you may haue taken in this behalfe.

The summe
of the duty of
Christians.

Mat. Nay rather let vs giue thanks to God our heavenly Father, who (of his bounty) hath bestowed on vs this knowledge of his trueth, and hath giuen vs also abilitie to declare it. Let vs now intreat him, that as this trueth is grounded onely in Iesus Christ his Sonne: so by the power of the holy Ghost it may be grafted in our mindes, that we may sincerely beleue it with the heart, constantly confesse it with the mouth, and shew forth the effects of it, in outward workes, euen to our last breath. Which that it may bee, I beseech God to grant vs also, that we may ioyne our selues to the militant Church, and by the ministerie thereof, bee confirmed in the loue and feare of God: that so wee may be at length receiued into the triumphant Church, together with our head and Lord Iesus Christ.

Theoph. I doe therefore entreate thee (most mightie God, and heavenly Father) to vouchsafe vs these graces, and to cause that the knowledge of thy trueth may bee spread abroad thorowout all the world; that all may acknowledge thee the onely true God, and Iesus Christ thy Sonne the onely Sauiour and Mediator of mankind. And to thee alone bee praise and glory, both now and for euer.

Mat. Amen.

F I N I S.

A SHORT TABLE, CONTAINING the principall points of this Booke.

A		
A doration of Creatures.	85	Word preached before the ad- ministration thereof. 230
In Aduersity six speciall points of consolation.	37	The agreement betweene Cir- cumcision and Baptisme. <i>ib.</i>
Afflictions for righteousness.	38.	What profit commeth by Bapti- zing of children. 231
Impossible for the godly to bee without them.	35	How, in Baptisme, the chil- dren of beleeuers lacking faith, be partakers of Christ. <i>ibid.</i>
Six fruits thereof, viz. Humili- tie, Repentance, Pitying of others, Prayer, Triall of our faith, Renouncing of the world.	32. 33. 34.	Battell of the flesh and spirit. 158
Articles, why there bee more than three concerning Christ in the Creed.	40	To Beleeue, what it is. 26
Use of the Articles of the Creed against three severall temp- tations.	<i>ibid.</i>	Difference betweene the Belee- uers, and Vbeleeuers, after this life. 258
B		To Binde, and Loose, what it is. 286
B ackbiting.	143	Bishop, why so called. 207
B aptisme, and the institu- tion thereof.	227	C
The signe and Sacramentall rite thereof.	227	T he name of Christ. 17
The commandement and pro- mise.	<i>ibid.</i>	His person. 13
The word in Baptisme ex- pounded.	229	His office of King, Prophet, and Priest. 18
What sinnes are put away in Baptisme.	<i>ibid.</i>	The summe & duty of a Chri- stian. 260
Our vnion with Christ thereby.	<i>ibid.</i>	Church, what it is. 55. Visible. 56. Inuisible. 55. Why it is called Holy, Catholike. 58. 59
Why Christ would haue the		Of the Church before Christ. <i>ibid.</i>
		Christ the foundation of the Church. 57
		The keyes of the Church. 215
		The exposition of the Com- mande-

THE TABLE.

mandements. 76.77.78.	
How the commandements of the first Table agree toge- ther. 76	
Communion of Saints. 65	
Creation, why ascribed to the Father. 28	
The exposition of the Creed. 24. 25. and 65. the parts thereof. 26	
D	
W hy Christs Death is oftener mentioned in the Scripture, than the other things he did for vs. 46	
Ecclesiasticall Discipline. 243	
Against Drunkenesse. 147	
E	
E lders why so called. 208	
Of Enuie. 148	
F	
F aith, what it is. 23.24.	
How Faith iustificieth. <i>ibid.</i>	
Faith cannot be without good works. 165. it is the mother of them, of which it is after- ward preserved. <i>ibid.</i>	
Why our Faith is referred to ech person of the Trinity, by it selfe. 26	
Whether the Father only crea- ted vs. 27	
Of Flattery, and what it is. 44	
Of mans Free-will. 8. and 52	
G	
W hy God is called Fa- ther. 29. Omnipotent. <i>ibid.</i> Maker of heauen and earth. <i>ibid.</i>	
The Gospell what it is. 212	
	H
	W hy the Holy Ghost is called holy, 28
	What the word Honour signi- fieth. 124
	What is the Happinesse of the godly in this life. 256
	Wherein it consisteth. 257
	I
	T he excuses of new Idola- ters. 88
	The answer vnto them. 89
	A comparing of the new and old Idolaters. 90
	Obiections of Idolaters for the adoration of Images. 93
	The answer vnto them. <i>ibid.</i>
	Why God is called Iealous. 101
	What the name Iesus signifieth. 17
	Of the Image of God. 10
	Imputation of Christs righte- ousnesse vnto vs. 155
	Who be Infidels. 26
	Of good Intents. 125
	Of Gods Iustice. 8
	Of Iustification. 21
	The faithfull can not be Iustifi- ed by works. 154
	Why wee be Iustified no other- wise than by Faith. 160
	K
	T he Kingdome of God, what it is. 187
	How it commeth. 182
	The Kingdome of Satan. 181
	L
	T he Law Moral what it is. 71. distinguished from the Ceremoniall and Iudiciall. <i>ib.</i> engraver

THE TABLE.

engraven in the mindes of men, renewed by Moses, expounded & dilated in many places of the Scriptures. 72	How many waies it is taken in vaine: <i>ibid.</i>
comprised in few words: and diuided into two Tables. <i>ibid.</i>	Who is our Neighbour. 154
the summe thereof. <i>ibid.</i> the vse thereof. 162	Against the Nicodemites. 102
The agreement and disagreement betweene the Law and Gospell. 213	O
It is neuer separated from the Gospell. 214	A N Oath what it is. 112
Why God gaue a Law that wee cannot keepe. 162	A vaine Oath. <i>ibid.</i>
Of Christian Liberty. 97	Against Anabaptists, that condemne all Oaths. 114
How Lord signifieth Redeemer. 28	Of Offences. 99
Lying & the three kinds thereof. 145	P
M	P Opish Pardons. 211
T He vse of Meats and other things. 98	Who bee comprehended vnder the name of Parents. 122
Christ, why a sufficient and only Mediator. 175	Of Christian Patience. 183
Merit of works, the examination and confirmation thereof. 167	A brieue rehearsall of Popish impieties. 210
Obiection of the defenders of Merit. 168	Prayer, and the excellencie thereof. 171. the chiefe worke of a Christian. <i>ibid.</i>
The answer thereto. <i>ibid.</i>	A short description of true praier. <i>ibid.</i>
Ordinarie calling of Ministers. 206	The sum & parts of the Lords Prayer. 176
Three things required in the lawfull calling of them. 207	The exposition thereof. 179
Why they are called Ministers. <i>ibid.</i>	180. &c.
Their authority. 216	What corruption Sathan hath brought into Praier. 197
N	Confutation of errors & obiections about Praier to Saints. 172. 173
T aking of Gods Name in vaine, what it is. 107	Whether the providence of God should keepe vs from Prayer. 195
	It is necessary to Pray vnto God, though hee know better than our selues what is expedient for vs. 196
	Preaching

THE TABLE.

Preaching, the right manner thereof.	214	The number of them.	ibid.
Prophaning of Gods Word.	108	Whether they bee necessary to Salvation.	226
Hurts growing of Prosperitie.	36	Saluation wrought by Christ.	15
Of Gods Prouidence in generall.	7	The assurance thereof.	249
In speciall towards the faithfull	29	Confirmed by Sanctification. ib.	
		Sanctification, what it is.	48
		Why ascribed to the holy Ghost.	28
R		Ministers, why called Sheepe-hearers.	208
The foundation of our Redemption.	39.	Sinne against the holy Ghost.	218
Why it is ascribed to the Sonne	28	Originall Sinne.	12
Regeneration, what it is.	48	How the children of the godlie are borne in originall Sinne	232
The Antitheses betweene Christian Religion and false Religion.	250. 251	Personall Succession.	209
Abridgement of the points of Christian Religion threefolde.	244. 245. 246	Of the word Supper, and the institution thereof.	232
God Remitteth the punishment and fault.	219	The signe thereof.	ibid.
An obiection against this doctrine, and the answer thereto.	210	Why there is a double signe therein.	233
Of Repentance.	50	The Sacramentall rite of the Supper.	ibid.
All sinnes forgiven to them that Repent.	218	What the Minister must doe in ministering the same.	ibid.
S		What they must doe that come vnto it.	ibid.
Sabbath, why it was commanded vnder the Law.	118	Our spirituall food in the Lords Supper.	234
Sacraments what they be.	222	Confutation of absurdities following vpon popish Transubstantiation of the Lords supper.	237
Of whom they ought to be administered.	223	Two things required in the Supper.	237
What be the conditions in them.	224	Eating of Christs body, & drinking his blood, in the Supper	ibid.
Vpon whom their efficacy dependeth.	225		

THE TABLE.

How taken. 240
How we on earth are partakers
of his bodie in heaven. *ibid.*
Swearing, see Oath.
This word Symbole, what it
signifieth. 25

T

Tables Of the Law, see
 Commandements and
 Law.

V

Why GOD claimeth
 Vengeance to him-
 selfe. 130
Our Vnion with Christ. 19
How the holy Ghost is saide to
be Author thereof. 55

W

Of false Witnesse bearing
 out of iudgement. 143
Of the Word preached and re-
ceiued by Faith. 202
The efficacy thereof. 217
Admonition to such as heare the
preaching of the Word. 203
What difference betweene the
good Works of the faithful
and vnfaithfull. 158
Threefold vse of good Works.
 164
The vse of the doctrine of good
Works. 170
Of the imperfection of our
Works. 168
Of spirituall Worship. 96
Against Worshipping of I-
dols. 87
Worshipping of Creatures. 85

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